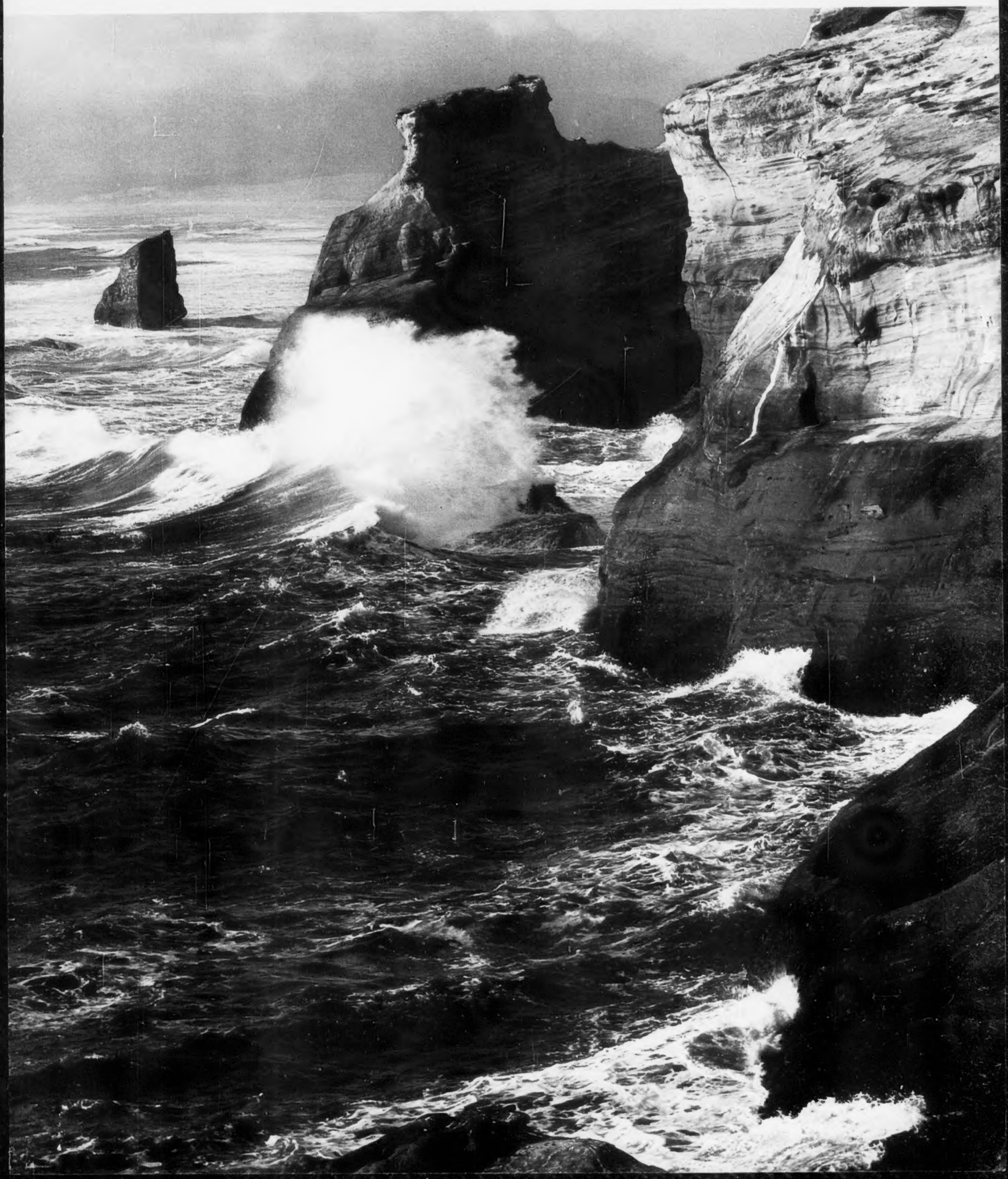
# THE AMERICAN WEST



*Cover: The Oregon coast, here represented by this glorious view at Cape Kiwanda, tantalized Spanish, Russian, and English maritime explorers for centuries before its rich interior was penetrated. But Captain Robert Gray's 1792 landing at the mouth of the Columbia River was followed in rapid succession by visits from other traders, the Vancouver Expedition, Lewis and Clark, and parties from the major fur companies. By 1845 Portland had been founded, and in 1860, with a population of 3,000, it was the largest urban center in the Pacific Northwest.*

*Coinciding with this year's Western History Association Conference, scheduled for October in that City of Roses, this issue of* The American West *features a bouquet of articles devoted to various aspects of Oregon and the Pacific Northwest.*

COVER PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID MUENCH

ELAINE GOBEL COLLECTION, NORTHWEST PHOTOGRAPHIC SERVICES

*Scandinavian fishermen reap a rich haul of salmon at seining grounds a few miles from Astoria, Oregon, in a photograph made about 1915 by Northwest photographer George M. Weister. In this method, once a part of a multimillion-dollar-a-year fisheries industry on the lower Columbia River, a skiff towed one end of a cork-floated net in a large circle while the other end was played out from a larger, stationary craft. Once the circle was completed, horses were often used to tow the "purse" into shallow water where the catch could be harvested.*

*Purse seining on the Columbia, along with the enormous salmon catches of the early years of this century, is now but a memory. A selection of other George Weister photographs of long-vanished Oregon scenes begins on page 41.*

DETAIL OF THE ORIGINAL PUBLIC ARCHIVES OF CANADA

WHEN Lt. Henry J. Warre of the British army painted this watercolor of Fort Vancouver in 1845, the once-great Hudson's Bay Company fur-trading post no longer dominated economic life in the Oregon Country. In fact, by the time Warre, who was a member of a British-government team sent out to determine the defensibility of the area against the Americans, returned to Montreal in July 1846, the Oregon region had been ceded to the United States. From then on the fort's days were numbered; by 1866 fire had destroyed the already abandoned buildings. For an account of Fort Vancouver in its prime, turn to page 12 of this issue of *The American West*.

# THE AMERICAN WEST
## THE MAGAZINE OF WESTERN HISTORY

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*September|October 1977 Volume XIV, Number 5*



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THE AMERICAN WEST is published in January, March, May, July, September, and November by the American West Publishing Company, Seth H. Baker, President. Editorial and advertising offices are located at Suite 160, 20380 Town Center Lane, Cupertino, California 95014. Single copy price: $3.00. Subscriptions: one year $12.00; two years $21.00; three years $31.00 (outside U.S. $1.00 extra). Manuscripts and communications from subscribers should be sent to the above address; members of the Western History Association should address all communications regarding subscriptions to William D. Rowley, Department of History, University of Nevada, Reno, Nevada 89507. THE AMERICAN WEST will consider, but assumes no responsibility for, unsolicited material.


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# FIRST CROSSING

"THE VOYAGEURS" BY CHARLES DEAS (1846) M. AND M. KAROLIK COLLECTION, MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON

# Alexander Mackenzie's Quest

# by David Lavender

# for the Pacific

ALEXANDER MACKENZIE'S obsession to make the first crossing of the American continent north of Mexico derived in part from the dreams of a man he disliked, Peter Pond. And so, in order to follow Mackenzie satisfactorily, we need to begin with his irascible mentor.

Pond had been born in Milford, Connecticut, in 1740. After serving while a teen-ager in the colonial army during England's conquest of Canada, he tried a trading trip to the West Indies and then shifted to fur gathering, an adventure that in time led him north to join the Scots and Anglo-Americans who were replacing the French as masters of the Indian trade.

Circumstances demanded the kind of shrewd toughness that Pond possessed in abundance. The traders he encountered, all of them supplied by commercial houses in Montreal, were racing each other furiously to reach unspoiled parts of the West where beaver were still plentiful and the Indians naive enough to exchange pelts at bargain rates for kettles, awls, beads, cloth, hatchets, knives, ornaments—and alcohol. By the time of Peter Pond's arrival, the vanguard of the competitors had pushed far up the north fork of the Saskatchewan River and had discovered the Churchill, a string of bright lakes connected by foaming rapids that ran eastward through the dark forests of the North into Hudson Bay.

Challenged thus by the Montreal traders, the employees of the Hudson's Bay Company were also pushing vigorously westward. Because their supply ships could reach into the heart of the continent by sailing across Hudson Bay, the English traders had a marked advantage over the Montrealers, who were limited to canoes that had to travel a thousand miles farther to reach the Indian country.

In an effort to overcome their disadvantage in distance, the men from Lower Canada built two relay points for forwarding their trade goods. The main one was at Grand Portage, near the western tip of Lake Superior. A secondary one, three hundred fifty miles farther west at Rainy Lake, saved voyageurs coming from deep in the interior an additional seven hundred miles per round trip. The quarrelsome builders of these posts also sought to form cooperative trading partnerships among themselves and with purchasing agents in Montreal, but although union was clearly desirable, mutual jealousies kept the first loose-jointed agreements from cohering.

Supported by one of those cantankerous groups, Pond in 1778 performed a prodigious wilderness feat by following the Churchill River to its source. From there he cajoled his frightened voyageurs across the awesome twelve-mile Methy portage into a north-sloping drainage system as yet untrodden by whites. He built a post on the Athabasca

*This article has been adapted from material in David Lavender's* Winner Take All: The Trans-Canada Canoe Trail *being published this fall by McGraw-Hill, New York. Copyright © 1977 by David Lavender.*

River thirty or forty miles south of the lake of the same name and spent a joyful winter skimming the cream from the richest beaver country yet opened in North America.

But those distances!—2,700 miles to Montreal with the furs, 2,700 back to Athabasca with more goods. Food caches had to be spotted along the way for the toiling voyageurs. Bad weather, accidents—it was not always possible to cover the miles in a summer, and on occasion Pond found himself caught by ice before reaching his destination.

Surely the Pacific could not be far away. And those great rivers of the Athabasca country! By then Pond had learned that after collecting in Great Slave Lake far to the north, their waters flowed west to—who knew where? Could that unexplored stream be used to give the Montrealers access to the interior from the Pacific? As Pond and his men roamed the Athabasca and Peace River area in search of furs, they asked endless questions of the Indians, receiving in return, in languages their interpreters did not understand clearly, a welter of confusing answers. But somewhere out yonder were "lakes" of salt water—plus, unhappily, the forbidding range of mountains now known as the Canadian Rockies.

The intensity of Pond's desire produced its own conviction: there *had* to be a way through. He received confirmation, so he thought, during a rare visit to Connecticut in the winter of 1784–85. There he read an official account of Captain James Cook's exploration, for the British Admiralty, of the northwest coast of America. What caught Pond's eye was Cook's description of a deep bay, since called Cook's Inlet, Alaska, which the navigator believed to be the outlet of a huge river. Pond immediately concluded that the vast stream which drained west out of Great Slave Lake somehow circled the Rockies and emptied into Cook's Inlet.

He was in a fever to prove his theory, but his own murderous temper prevented it. A few years earlier he had been involved in a scuffle that had ended in the death of a competitor, and on his return from Connecticut to Athabasca as chief agent for a new organization called the North West Company, he became involved in yet another slaying of a prominent opponent, John Ross.

By then the lawlessness of the fur companies was stirring anger among government officials. Hoping to put their house in order before losing their trading licenses, the antagonistic groups combined again, still under the name North West Company. Pond was ordered to spend the winter of 1787–88 teaching the routines of the Athabasca district to the youngest of the slain Ross's partners, Alexander Mackenzie, and then leave the back country forever.

*Preceding two pages: During the eighteenth century, fur traders like Peter Pond and Alexander Mackenzie pushed deep into the Canadian West in their continual search for pelts. In* The Voyageurs *(1846), American artist Charles Deas has captured the flavor of this heritage.*

IN SOME WAYS Alexander Mackenzie loomed bigger than life. His portrait in the National Gallery of Canada at Ottawa shows a dark-eyed Byronesque figure presumably capable of conquering either hearts or raging torrents. His physical resilience was notable even in a land of powerful males; according to William McGillivray, the two of them occasionally snowshoed seven hundred miles just to have Christmas dinner with a friend.

Though not addicted to alcohol, Mackenzie was able to drink under the table all the other roisterers at Montreal's famed Beaver Club. Like most fur traders he took Indian women into his post as bedmates. He fathered at least one half-blood son. A white woman in Montreal, her identity now unknown, presented him with an illegitimate daughter, and some biographers suggest there were more. He did not seek the quiet of domesticity until he was forty-eight years old and a knight of the British realm. His bride is said to have been thirteen years old.

Ambition gave him a strong sense of his own worth. With Indians he was marvelously patient. With whites he could be by turn ill-tempered and then so aloof that in the estimation of historian Bernard DeVoto he suffered from a "paralysis of personal emotion." Yet it is impossible to read his letters and his account of his explorations, ghost-written though it was, without sensing the infectious quality of leadership that again and again roused his men into achieving more than they believed possible.

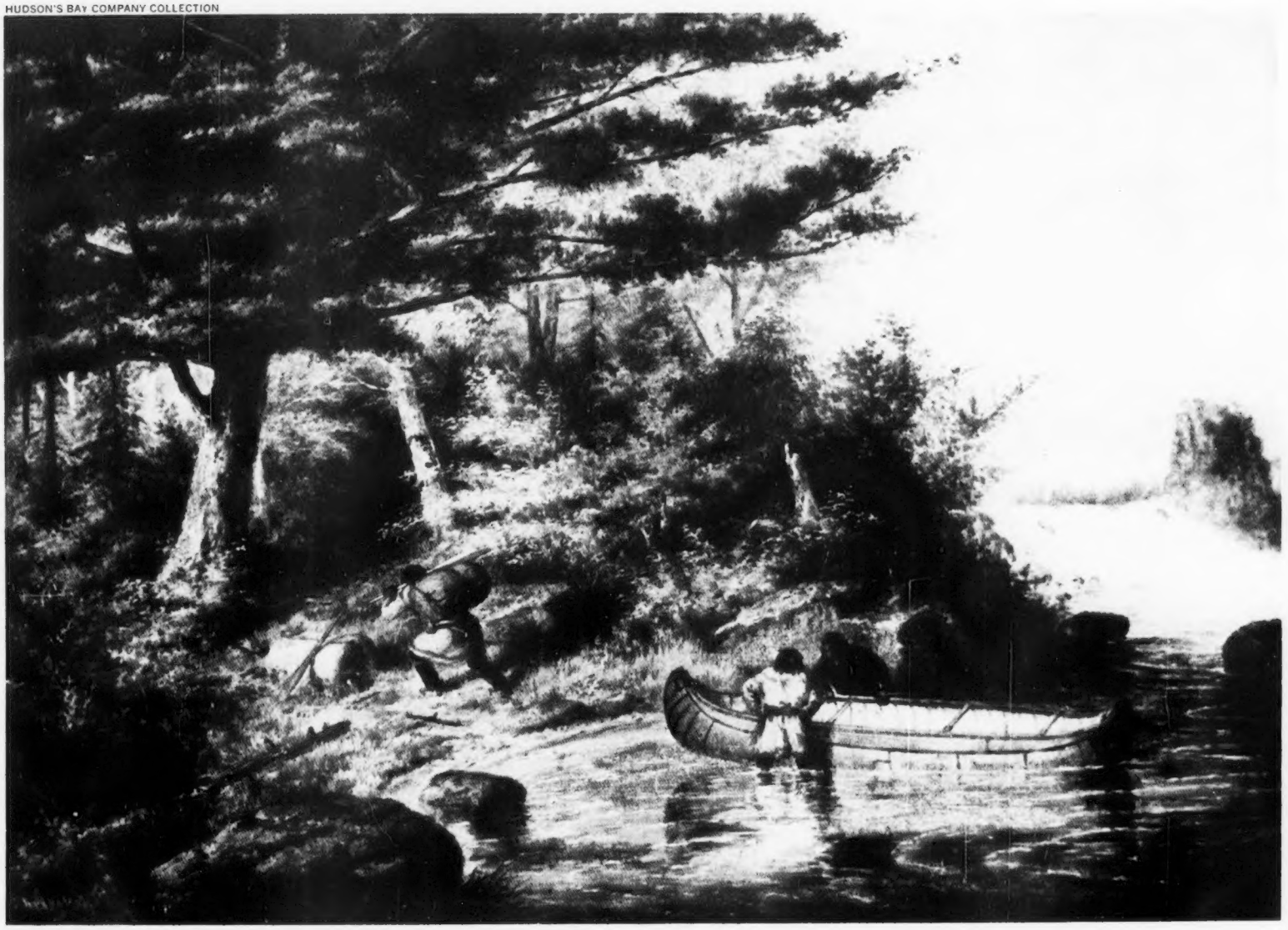
He had been born in either 1763 or, possibly, 1764 on the storm-battered Outer Hebrides island of Lewis, as far north in its part of the United Kingdom as Lake Athabasca was in the New World. His mother died when he was ten, and his father thereupon emigrated to New York State with the three children still remaining at home. On the outbreak of the Revolution, the elder Mackenzie joined a Loyalist regiment. Alexander was sent for safety's sake to Canada.

At the age of fifteen he went to work in the Montreal office of a vigorous competitor of the loosely linked North West Company. By the time he was twenty he was a full partner in the organization. After the firm entered the reorganized North West Company he was tapped for the key job of supplanting Pond in Athabasca.

Although he did not like Pond personally, he absorbed like a fever the Connecticut Yankee's passion for finding a canoe route to the Pacific. Their shared concern led them to abandon Pond's original post beside the Athabasca River in favor of a new one to be located somewhere on the shores of Athabasca Lake—one capable of eventually functioning, if all went well, as a grand staging depot on the route to the Pacific.

The next step was to send into the north a man qualified to build the new post the following summer, while Pond and Mackenzie hurried to Grand Portage, the former on his way to retirement and the latter to persuade the partners at the annual rendezvous to let him make a dash for

HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY COLLECTION



*Like Peter Pond before him, Alexander Mackenzie dreamed of discovering a river that would connect the Canadian interior with the Pacific.* Indians Portaging Furs *(1858) by Canadian painter Cornelius Krieghoff suggests some of the difficulties of the long overland route that Pond and Mackenzie hoped to circumvent.*

the ocean during the summer of 1789.

Their choice as builder fell on Alexander's cousin, Roderick McKenzie. Rory, as Alexander called him, was a studious, sweet-tempered misfit in the fur trade. He hated its brutalities and isolation, and planned to leave at the end of the current trading season. He was thoroughly reliable, however, and Alexander was determined to have him. In January 1788, he traveled by snowshoe to Ile-a-la-Crosse Lake on the Churchill River, where Rory was stationed, turned on his charm, and won his way.

Rory located the new fort, named Chipewyan after the local Indians, on a conspicuous promontory on the south shore of the lake. It was habitable when Alexander returned in the fall, exhilarated by the company's approval of his crucial expedition. As spring neared, his men collected special bark, watape, and gum. With those materials they built a canoe thirty-two feet long—large for the area. They prepared twenty-five bundles of goods, each weighing ninety pounds, for use primarily in winning the goodwill of the Indians along the way. Several bales of pemmican and corn provided rations, but since these would not be enough, extra powder and ball for hunting were added in waterproof kegs.

The voyageurs were carefully chosen. There were four French Canadians and a wandering German, John Steinbruck, who somehow had found employment as a North West Company canoeman. Two of the French Canadians were allowed to take their Indian wives with them as camp tenders. Five Indians went along in two small canoes to help hunt and convince suspicious strangers that the party came in peace. The leader of the five traveled in one canoe with his two wives. Two males paddled the second small craft. The fleet was to be accompanied as far as the north shore of Great Slave Lake by Laurent Leroux and a crew assigned to open a post in that area.

The trip began at 1 A.M., June 3, 1789. The first leg was known. In spite of disagreeable weather and occasional rough water, the wayfarers spent only a week reaching the central part of Great Slave Lake's southern shore. There they were halted by terrifying sheets of ice. Seeking

NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA, OTTAWA

*Soon after Alexander Mackenzie posed for this circa 1800 portrait by London artist Thomas Lawrence, he was knighted by King George III for his daring and arduous journey across Canada to the Pacific. This honor, along with the publication of his personal account of his exploits, brought Mackenzie world-wide recognition.*

refuge, they turned eastward through channels protected by a chain of islands. This was not the direction they wanted to go, but it did bring them to a small trading post that sheltered them from the rain that day after day swept the lake's three-hundred-mile expanse.

After nearly two weeks of the miseries of waiting, Mackenzie decided that the lake was open enough so that the party could risk crossing to Leroux's destination on the north shore. By scooting from one big island to another, they gained that goal on June 23. Leaving Leroux to his trading, the explorers edged west, wary of ice floes camouflaged by rippling water and gauzelike patches of mist. Though they picked up a local Indian to serve as guide, he knew little more about this section of the lake than they did, and they kept blundering into and then having to leave one deceptive bay after another. A week of hard paddling under clouds of mosquitoes went by before they felt the pull of the river they were looking for.

With sails hoisted the canoes surged down the stream so fast that the cloven water hissed around the bows with a sound like boiling water. For more than two hundred miles the river thrust mainly west. Then, as the serrated white peaks of the Rockies came into view, it bent northwest, parallel to the range. Day after day it held that direction.

Mackenzie had a sextant with him. He was no surveyor, but he had learned to take the sun's altitude, and by using prepared nautical tables he could make fairly accurate estimates of his latitude. As his figures kept rising toward sixty-five degrees and then above, his heart sank. They had gone far past the latitude ascribed by James Cook to the Alaskan inlet that bore his name; there was no break visible in the mountains and thus no hope that the river would reach the Pacific.

The land flattened; the stream split into multiple channels. Mackenzie chose the middle course and presently reached a wide expanse of water. Although it was July 11, icebergs were visible. In spite of the water's brackish taste, he thought he had encountered another of the north's vast lakes. But that night the rising tide wet the baggage the men had left close to the shoreline, and a little later, as they prowled among the islands, they saw whales. So his fears were confirmed; he had come to an ocean, but not the one he wanted.

Physically, it had been a stupendous achievement—1,075 miles from Great Slave Lake to the Arctic Ocean in fourteen days, an average of seventy-five miles a day. And now, with no exultation to buoy them, the men had to go back, fighting the same current that had made their swift descent possible. Mile after mile they bucked it by harnessing themselves like mules into the cordelle ropes and stumbling ahead through mud, in hip-deep water, or over debris left piled on the banks by the receding spring runoff.

Whenever they met Indians who could be enticed into conversation, Mackenzie plied them with questions through his interpreters. Snatches of what he learned led him to believe that beyond the mountains there was another huge river. (Probably he was hearing of the Yukon.) Still farther west, the Indians said, was a lake of undrinkable water that bearded white men (Russians perhaps) visited in big canoes, trading iron and other fine things for sea-otter pelts.

The thought of what he was missing put Mackenzie beside himself. As the mountains drew nearer, he determined to hike to the crest of the closest peak for a view that might reveal an opening. The wild quest led through dense underbrush to a swamp too large to circle. Obsessed, Mackenzie plunged ahead regardless, wading through muck to his waist until exhaustion forced him to give up and return to the riverside camp.

ON SEPTEMBER 12, after an absence of 102 days, the party regained Fort Chipewyan. This was early enough so that when his cousin Rory returned from Rainy Lake with the winter's consignment of merchandise, Alexander was well refreshed. Meticulously, as was his custom, he pressed ahead with what he knew most of his partners would value more than exploration, namely, the streamlining for greater profits of the firm's most productive district.

In 1790 he again made the long trip to Lake Superior to report on his work to the partners assembled at the annual Grand Portage rendezvous. Self-pity was not one of his flaws, but this year it touched his pen when he wrote Rory that little attention was paid during the meetings to his epic journey. Yet what was there to say? He had proved that Pond's surmise about a connection with Cook's Inlet was wrong. Negative triumphs, however, did not further the company's need for improved transportation. Unimpressed, the partners did not even offer to name the river, the second longest in North America, after its explorer. That was done years later by the famed Arctic traveler, Sir John Franklin.

This does not mean that his other accomplishments were undervalued. Under his and Rory's management the Athabasca Department was turning out 20,000 made beaver a year. Potential for more abounded, as his examination of the fur fields around and beyond Great Slave Lake made clear. In recognition of services rendered and as a stimulation for the future he was granted, at the 1790 meeting, another share in the company, so that at the age of twenty-six he became the most potent of the wintering partners. It seems likely, too, from the way affairs developed during succeeding years, that he was also given permission to try again to reach the Pacific, this time by ascending the Peace River, which entered Lake Athabasca from the southwest.

In addition he received that summer a stark reminder of his inadequacies as an explorer. Both on his way to Grand Portage and on his return, he met beside the lower Saskatchewan a surveyor, Philip Turnor, employed by the Hudson's Bay Company to map its routes and trad-

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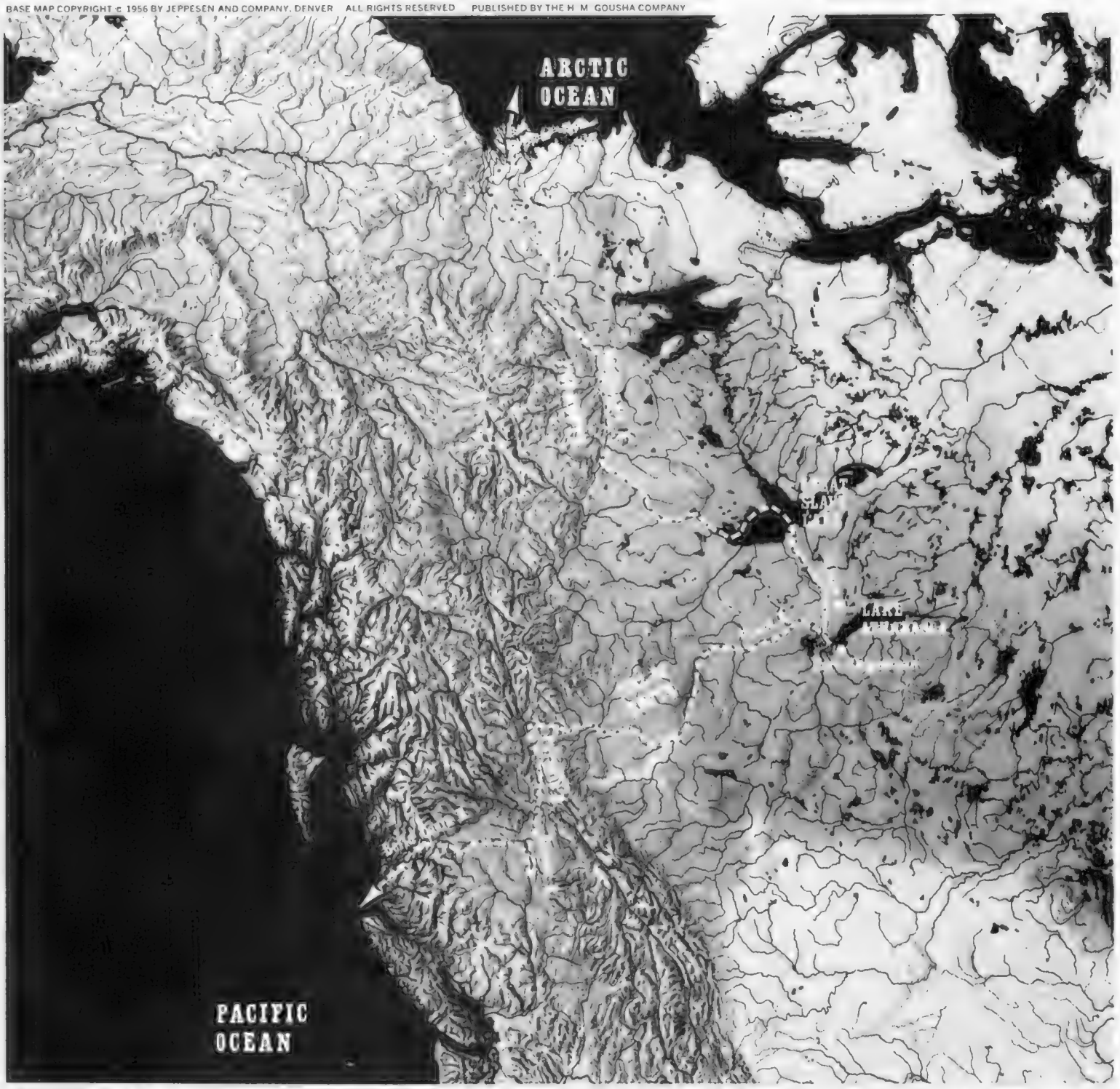


*Alexander Mackenzie twice tried to find a viable fur-trade route to the Pacific: his disappointing 1789 journey took him northwest down today's Mackenzie River to the Arctic; his arduous 1793 expedition wound over the Rockies on the Peace River, then followed the Parsnip, Fraser, and Bella Coola rivers to the Pacific.*

ing posts. With Turnor were two first-class traders, Malcolm Ross and Peter Fidler, whom Turnor was training in the use of sextants, chronometers, telescopes, and theodolites. Whenever that trio arrived anywhere, they knew exactly where they were. This was more than Mackenzie did. After talking to Turnor he realized that he could not say where on the globe his river ran or where it reached the sea. As a consequence he could not relate it usefully to any other spot in Canada. The deficiency was one he vowed then and there to remedy.

On dispatching his men from Fort Chipewyan to their wintering grounds that fall (1790), Mackenzie ordered them to ask every Indian they saw about streams beyond the mountains into which the Peace headed. They returned in the spring with garbled accounts of what seemed to be two rivers. One, in the north, was evidently the same stream (the Yukon?) of which he had heard during his return from the Arctic. The other, about which nothing was clear, ran farther south. Reports of it awoke old echoes. The Great River of the West. As a theoretical concept it had tantalized

Champlain and had been a magnet for La Vérendrye. As the mythical River Ourigan, from whence the name Oregon derives, it had played during the late 1760s an ambiguous role in Robert Rogers's fuzzy plans for creating a private fur preserve somewhere beyond Minnesota. Now here it was again, apparently a reality at last but still shrouded in such vapors that Mackenzie gave up trying to make sense out of the reports.

In 1791 he journeyed east once more with the furs. From Grand Portage he continued to England, whether at his own expense or at the company's is unknown. He spent the winter studying surveying. He read trader John Meares's new book about the sea-otter trade with the Orient that was being developed from a central base at Nootka Sound on the west coast of what became Vancouver Island, and he followed closely the quarrel over control of the area that came within inches of bringing England and Spain to war. Clearly the opportunities inherent in linking beaver and otter to the markets of both China and London were dazzling.

On returning to Fort Chipewyan in the fall of 1792 he found that Rory had sent two men far up the Peace toward the mountains to hew timbers for building a new post that could serve both as a trading center and as a base for yet another thrust toward the Pacific. Delighted by his cousin's foresight, on October 10, 1792, Mackenzie and a group of voyageurs started out for the new establishment with three laden trading canoes.

Because they dreaded winter, the voyageurs worked with a will. They went west first and then south for more than two hundred miles. On November 1, 1792, they passed the site of today's village of Peace River, Alberta, and shortly thereafter were welcomed to their stopping place by bursts of musket fire from Rory's two whites and seventy or so Indians.

The whites had worked well in anticipation of their arrival. They had cut and stacked enough pickets 18 feet tall and 7 inches in diameter to enclose a square 120 feet to the side. They had dug a trench 3 feet deep for receiving the posts and had squared enough logs for building living quarters and storerooms. None of the structures had been erected, however, and Mackenzie's men, all of whom had just toiled to Rainy Lake and back, had to pitch tents as their only defense against the deepening frost.

The crews spent the first several days equipping the Indians for their winter hunt. When building began, the cold was so intense that ax blades were as brittle as glass. Progress was slow. Mackenzie did not move out of his tent into his log house until two days before Christmas. Almost immediately thereafter Chinook winds and warm rains from the Pacific washed the snow from the ground and gave the river ice the appearance that it had when breaking up in the spring. The mildness lasted until February. Then the wind shifted, and the returning cold was so bitter that Mackenzie's watch would not run.

LATE IN APRIL spring arrived with a burst. After sending six canoes stuffed with furs to Fort Chipewyan, Mackenzie put his own specially made craft into the water. Smaller than the one he had taken to the Arctic, it measured twenty-five feet inside. Its beam was four feet nine inches, yet it was light enough so that two men walking on a good trail could carry it three to four miles without resting—which may reveal as much about the voyageurs as about the canoe.

The fragile craft was heavily laden: ten men; one large dog to act as sentry and to help hunt; and three thousand pounds of food, arms, trade goods, and, because Mackenzie knew his people, extra quantities of rum. Six French-Canadians, two of whom had been on the trip to the Arctic, manned the paddles. Two Indians went along as hunters and interpreters. Mackenzie's second in command was clerk Alexander McKay. This time there were no women; Mackenzie does not indicate why.

Launching occurred without ceremony on May 9, 1793. Except for chill nights and the unending, high-pitched whine of swarms of mosquitoes by day, the first part of the trip was a delight. Flowers gleamed; newborn buffalo calves frisked through the rippling grass. Friendly Indians trotted along the banks, conversing with the occupants of the canoes and occasionally begging to be ferried across the spring-swollen river. Now and then Mackenzie complied, for he was anxious to locate a certain aged man who, during a winter visit to the fort, had described to him the splitting of the Peace far inside the mountains. Under no condition, the man had warned, should the explorers swing up the north fork, for it frayed out into small streamlets plunging down the sides of gigantic peaks. But the south fork, he said, would lead to a divide beyond which a mighty river rolled to the sea.

The directions ran contrary to Mackenzie's expectations. He still believed (wrongly) that the northern river of which he kept hearing emptied into Cook's Inlet. By contrast, the reports that he picked up of a river to the south were fuzzy and contradictory. No coastal explorer, and he had read all their accounts, mentioned a major river in the south. Besides, if he went much farther south, he would add unwelcome miles to his proposed supply line. Yet the old Indian had been insistent: don't go north. If the fellow were with them when they reached the forks—but they did not find him.

At 2 P.M. on May 17, at a point a bit west of present-day Fort Saint John, British Columbia, the snow-whitened peaks of the Rockies appeared ahead. Hearts leaped. Only nine days to gain this sight—perhaps the way was not going to be so bad after all.

They reckoned without a stony ridge that some miles farther on cut directly across their route. The river had hewn a V-shaped trench a thousand feet deep through the barrier. Later surveyors would find that the canyon was

*Continued on page 67*

FORT VANCOUVER, PAINTED BY AN UNKNOWN ARTIST ABOUT 1845 OIL ON CANVAS. DETAIL OF THE ORIGINAL

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# FORT VANCOUVER

## Fur Trade Capital of the Pacific Northwest

*by John A. Hussey*

IT WAS DAWN on March 19, 1825. In the early light a few British and French-Canadian fur traders and their Indian neighbors assembled in the courtyard of a partially built log fort in the Oregon wilderness. Then a sturdy little man with the assured step of a Bantam cock walked to the flagstaff and smashed a bottle of rum against it. "In behalf of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company," he announced in a loud voice, "I hereby name this establishment Fort Vancouver."

As he christened the new post, Governor George Simpson, chief executive of the larger part of the Hudson's Bay Company's territories in North America, was keenly aware that more was involved than merely the interest of the fur trade. A bid for empire was being made.

The United States and Great Britain both claimed the vast region west of the Rockies between Mexico and Alaska. In 1824 the Americans had offered not to press for the country north of the forty-ninth parallel, while the British indicated a willingness to renounce claims to the land south of the Columbia River. No agreement could be reached at that time, but thereafter the only territory seriously in dispute was the area between the forty-ninth parallel and the lower Columbia. But it was precisely that wedge of land which each nation considered vital, the United States because it wanted the harbors on Puget Sound, Britain for the same reason but even more because it believed the Columbia River was a necessary avenue of communication for the Hudson's Bay Company's traders, who were almost the only European residents in all the Oregon Country. The firm, directed by its governor and committee in London, did nothing to discourage this thinking on the part of its government. It was determined to hold the region north of the Columbia as a barrier to protect the rich fur resources of New Caledonia (the area now

MEZZOTINT FROM AN OIL PAINTING BY STEPHEN PEARCE

PUBLIC ARCHIVES OF CANADA

*Hard-driving George Simpson directed the establishment of Fort Vancouver and set the policies that guided its development. Child of an unknown mother, he was born in Scotland about 1787 and raised in his father's family. Sent to a London brokerage firm while still a boy, his ability was recognized by a Hudson's Bay Company director. In 1820 he went to America for Hudson's Bay and achieved such success that he was soon governor of all of the firm's territories. Knighted in 1841, Simpson remained one of Canada's great business leaders until his death in 1860.*

encompassing northern British Columbia).

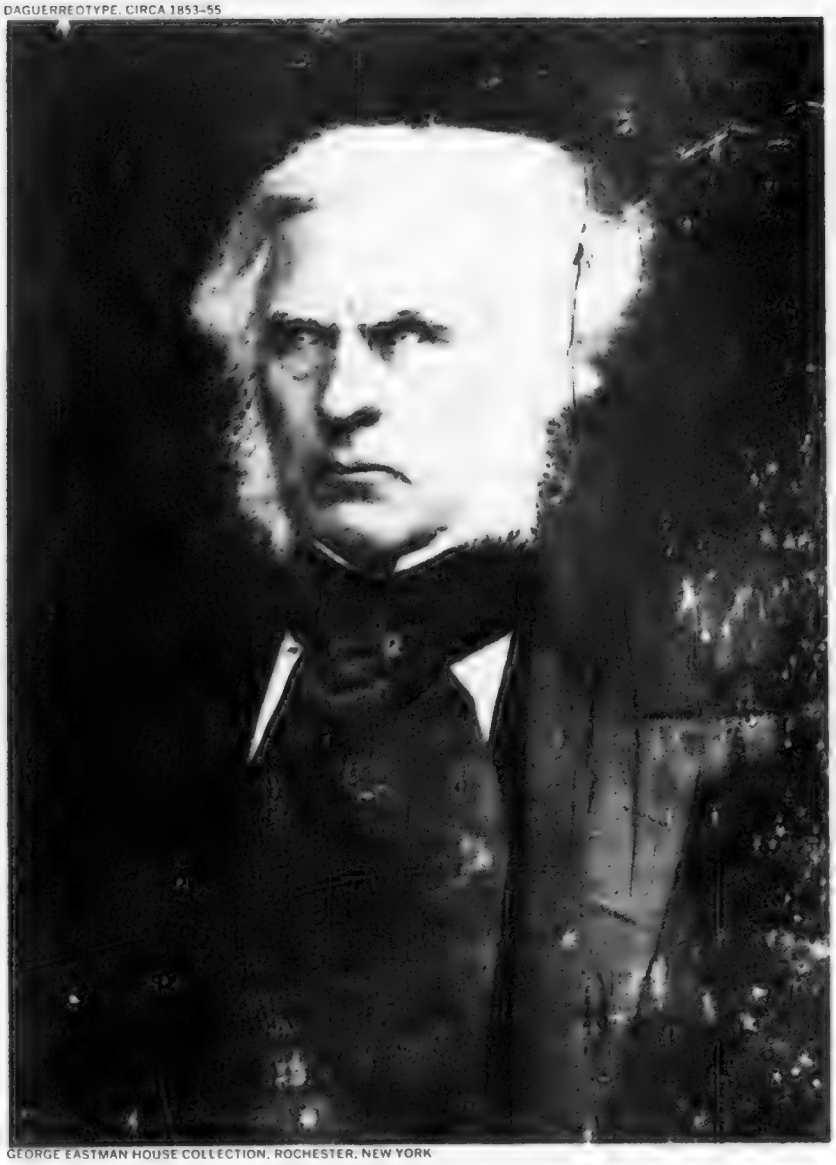
Since 1813 the headquarters and supply depot for the British fur trade in the Columbia basin had been Fort George, the former American post of Astoria on the south bank of the river near its mouth. The Americans had sold out to the North West Company of Montreal during the War of 1812, and that firm merged into the ancient and powerful Hudson's Bay Company in 1821. Fort George had certain drawbacks as an entrepôt. To reach it, vessels had to pass the dangerous bar at the river's entrance, and it was not centrally located for the expanded operations the London committee was planning for the Northwest Coast. Still, Fort George served the company well.

The governor and committee, however, saw little point in maintaining establishments south of the river on land which could be surrendered to the Americans at any time, and they believed the firm's position in Oregon could be strengthened by concentrating developments in the region they most wanted to retain. The British government felt that such a policy would serve national interests, and Foreign Secretary George Canning suggested that the firm move its depot. Accordingly, during the summer of 1824 the committee instructed its officers in America to abandon all posts south of the river and to construct a new headquarters on the north shore.

Governor Simpson was completely in accord with this decision, but he had his own reasons for wishing the depot moved. The Columbia District had long operated below its potential level of profitability, and as early as 1822 he had predicted that costs could be cut by growing more food there. During late 1824 and early 1825 he visited the district with a view to overhauling its operations. He quickly decided that farming should be greatly expanded. But the climate and terrain at Fort George appeared unsuitable for large-scale agriculture, and very shortly after his arrival there on November 8 the "Little Emperor" sent out Chief Factors John McLoughlin and Alexander Kennedy to find a more desirable site. Later he told the London directors that his "main object" in relocating the post was "that of rendering ourselves independent of foreign aid in regard to the means of Subsistence."

McLoughlin and Kennedy scouted along the north bank of the Columbia, but they could not find a satisfactory location for both a depot and a farm until they reached

DAGUERREOTYPE, CIRCA 1853–55



GEORGE EASTMAN HOUSE COLLECTION, ROCHESTER, NEW YORK

*John McLoughlin for twenty years directed Hudson's Bay operations west of the Rockies from his headquarters at Fort Vancouver. Born in Canada in 1784 and trained as a physician, he became a fur trader for the North West and Hudson's Bay companies. From 1824 until his retirement in 1846 he managed the Hudson's Bay Columbia Department, strongly influencing development of the Oregon Country. McLoughlin died in Oregon City in 1857, embittered by the loss of his land claim under American law, a shabby reward for his generous aid to settlers.*

a place called "Belle Vue Point," 110 miles upstream from the Pacific and about 5 miles above the mouth of the Willamette River. There a wide, grass-covered plain bordering the Columbia seemed ideal for both cultivation and stock raising. But mindful of the river's frequent floods and the need for defense, the two officers decided to erect the stockade on a bluff about a mile back from the stream. The School for the Deaf in Vancouver, Washington, occupies the site today.

Simpson enthusiastically approved the location. "A Farm to any extent may be made there," he noted in his journal. Certain obvious disadvantages of the location bothered him not a whit. The new depot would be far from the sea, and its position back from the river would tie up expensive labor in carrying goods to and from the warehouses. But Simpson by that time was planning to build a new depot for both the Columbia and New Caledonia districts farther north on the Fraser River. Therefore he viewed the new post on the Columbia as only a temporary depot, and he found its location satisfactory for a "secondary Establishment." He sent a crew to begin construction.

By mid March 1825, a stockade seventeen feet high had been completed. It enclosed an area 250 feet deep and 150 feet wide. There were two "temporary" bastions at diagonal corners, while within the pickets two warehouses, a dwelling for officers, an Indian hall, and several other buildings were in various stages of construction. Simpson was pleased with the progress, and thus at dawn on the nineteenth he "baptised" the new fort with considerable pride. The name "Fort Vancouver" was carefully chosen. It was intended to link the company's presence in the Pacific Northwest with British claims based on the discoveries of Captain George Vancouver.

Shortly after the ceremony, Governor Simpson and a party of voyageurs started up the river on the long journey to Hudson Bay. Behind him, in command of Fort Vancouver and the Columbia District, he left Chief Factor John McLoughlin. Relations between these two strong characters had been reasonably friendly, but McLoughlin must have breathed a sigh of relief when he saw the governor embark. It was difficult for a district manager to perform his proper functions while under the scrutiny of those sharp blue eyes "ever ablaze in peace or war."

MURAL PAINTING BY BARRY FAULKNER IN THE OREGON STATE CAPITOL ROTUNDA

OREGON STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

DR. JOHN MCLOUGHLIN was in many respects the ideal person to carry out Simpson's program of reform and expansion. Standing six feet four or more in height, with snow white hair cascading about his shoulders and blue gray eyes flashing beneath bushy brows, the new manager was overwhelming in appearance and in manner. It required such a man, formidable, determined, and loyal, to carry through the "Little Emperor's" orders for a reduced work force, harder labor, fewer luxuries, enlarged fields of operation, and a vigorous opposition to rival traders.

Trained in Canada as a medical doctor, McLoughlin had proved himself to be a highly efficient, if occasionally dissatisfied, fur trader for both the North West Company and, after 1821, the Hudson's Bay Company. He was dictatorial, opinionated, paternalistic, and often violent in temper. Governor Simpson said that a simple difference of opinion with him was tantamount to a declaration of war. But he was also gracious, kindly, and charitable. For twenty years after 1825 the "White-Headed Eagle," as he was known to the Indians, was the dominant figure in the Oregon Country. Due to his assistance to missionaries and settlers he is remembered today as the "Father of Oregon."

After the departure of Simpson, construction slowed at Fort Vancouver. Illness and the governor's reforms resulted in severe manpower shortages. As a result several buildings were never entirely completed during the four years of this "old fort's" existence.

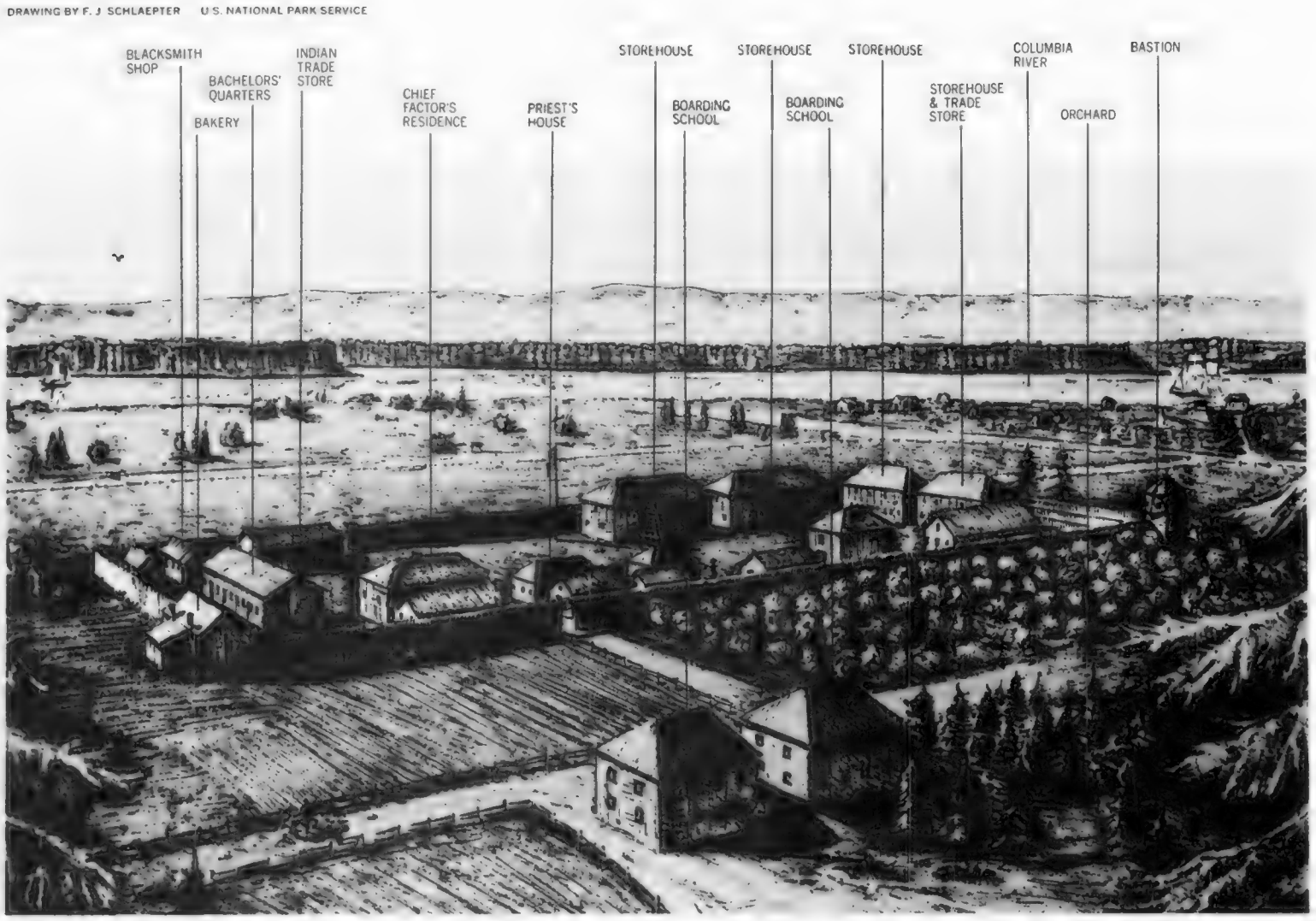
Even with his reduced crew, McLoughlin got a plow started during April 1825, and he soon had a hundred bushels of potatoes and a quarter acre of beans and peas in the ground. This modest beginning to Simpson's farm "to any extent" marked the effective start of large-scale agriculture in the Pacific Northwest. That autumn the com-

*Impressed by the vitality of Fort Vancouver, American missionary Narcissa Whitman found it "the New York of the Pacific Coast" when she was greeted there by John McLoughlin in 1836 (painting at left). Countless visitors—explorers, rival traders, scientists, and settlers —were welcomed and aided by McLoughlin, though he realized that the arrival of Americans in ever-increasing numbers meant the end of Hudson's Bay Company dominance in Oregon Country.*

pany's express from Hudson Bay brought more seeds from Governor Simpson. The next spring McLoughlin planted two bushels of wheat—the first to be grown in the present state of Washington. The "Big Doctor" was so pleased with the progress of the farm that he believed importation of Indian corn and wheat flour could be discontinued after 1828.

During the summer of the latter year, American trapper and explorer Jedediah Smith sought refuge at Fort Vancouver after most of his party had been massacred by the Indians. McLoughlin received this rival with sympathy and housed and fed him free of charge for months. Smith repaid his hospitality by observing all he could of British fur-trade operations and later reporting on them to the United States secretary of war. Among other things, he noted that apples and grapes were already growing at Fort Vancouver when he arrived. An oft-repeated story maintains that a half-pay British naval officer being sent out from England to take charge of the company's vessels pocketed seeds from the fruit he ate at a farewell dinner and carried them to Oregon. In any case, the seedlings seen by Jedediah Smith were the first cultivated fruits in the Pacific Northwest.

A few cattle and hogs were transferred from Fort George to the new depot. Much to the later disgust of the company's ship captains as well as officers of visiting naval vessels, Simpson and McLoughlin were determined that no cattle should be killed for food until the herds were large enough to supply the meat needed for the western establishments. Thanks to this policy and to periodic importations of stock from California, Hawaii, and England, there were soon impressive numbers of cattle, horses, hogs, goats, sheep, and domestic fowl at the post. Within little more than a decade the Columbia Department was largely




*At its peak, Fort Vancouver was as large as five football fields and included twenty-three major buildings. In this artist's concept of the fort in the 1840s, the light-colored buildings represent existing reconstructions.*

the self-sustaining unit Governor Simpson had planned.

As early as 1824–25 the "Little Emperor" was thinking of joining the Columbia District and New Caledonia into a single administrative department supplied from a central entrepot. The first step in this direction was taken when the chief factor in New Caledonia was ordered to bring his fur returns to Fort Vancouver in 1826. The consolidation was completed over the next year or two, and McLoughlin became, in Simpson's words, "head factor and chief resident-Manager of the Hudson's Bay Company on the western coast of the continent."

The question of where to locate the permanent depot for this expanded Columbia Department began to clarify itself about the same time. In 1827 the United States and Great Britain agreed to leave all of the Oregon Country open indefinitely to settlement by citizens of both nations. Thus the Hudson's Bay Company could be reasonably certain that its operations south of the Columbia would continue for a number of years. A hair-raising trip down the Fraser River in 1828 convinced Governor Simpson that his hope of supplying the interior by that stream was out of the question. The Columbia River now appeared to be the only practicable route, and Fort Vancouver was recognized as the logical site for the entrepôt. Although the committee in London vacillated for years as to the proper final location, Fort Vancouver continued to serve as the depot until 1845.

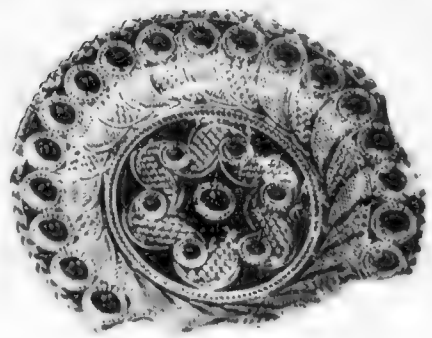
These moves greatly increased the importance of the new post on the Columbia. The fur-trade operations supervised and supplied from it covered a veritable empire—the entire Pacific Slope from the Mexican boundary at the forty-second parallel on the south to Russian Alaska on the north. In addition, the company's trapping parties roamed well into Mexican territory through the Great Basin and California.

Over the years, as Chief Factor McLoughlin vigorously carried out the policies of the London committee and Governor Simpson, his responsibilities and his area of operations expanded. The company was determined to capture the fur trade of the Northwest Coast from the enterprising Americans who had long dominated it. This goal was largely accomplished within ten or twelve years through a series of posts built to serve the fierce tribes along the shores of present-day British Columbia. Several

ALL PHOTOGRAPHS: U S NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, FORT VANCOUVER NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

SNUFF CONTAINER

POMADE JAR



PRESSED GLASS FRAGMENT

ALE JAR

*After 1866 no visible traces remained from the fur trade capital of the Northwest. Archeological excavations initiated in 1947, however, uncovered stockade and building foundations and thousands of artifacts like these above.*

trading vessels gathered in the pelts not collected at these new establishments. The final nail in the coffin of the American trade was driven in 1839 when an agreement between the Hudson's Bay Company and the Russian American Company cut the New Englanders off from selling supplies in Sitka and leased the mainland portion of the Alaska Panhandle to the British firm. Soon Hudson's Bay posts extended north nearly to present-day Juneau.

A "Marine Department" under McLoughlin's direction was formally established in 1829, and soon seven vessels were employed on the coast, on trading ventures to other Pacific ports, and in the annual voyages to and from London. Between 1841 and 1845 the company operated a merchandising store at Yerba Buena on San Francisco Bay, but this outpost of the Columbia Department was not successful. The firm had better fortune in the Hawaiian Islands. Surplus lumber, shingles, and salmon found a good market there. In fact, the natives acquired a taste for preserved salmon which still persists. The company opened an agency in Honolulu in 1833. At first it was supervised from Fort Vancouver, but in 1844 Governor Simpson decided that McLoughlin had "fully as many irons in the fire as he could attend to" and removed the Hawaiian enterprise from his control.

By act of Parliament the Hudson's Bay Company had a monopoly of British trade in the Far West, and several of its officers held commissions as justices of the peace for the courts of Canada. Thus the firm had the appearance of representing British authority in Oregon. The United States, on the other hand, long had no official representatives in the region, and for many years American traders and settlers were few, scattered, and disorganized. The Hudson's Bay Company was the only effective force to provide such services as maintaining peace with the Indians and controlling the liquor traffic.

The firm also dominated economic life in the Oregon Country. Because of its abundant resources it could afford to lower prices to discourage competition. Fort Vancouver and other company posts contained the only adequate stocks of the farm implements, livestock, ammunition, and other necessities required by farmers and free trappers, and the firm was almost the sole outlet for the products of farm and hunt. This grip on the market gave the "salmon-

*Continued on page 68*

# The Pomo Indian Portraits of Grace Carpenter Hudson

## by Searles R. Boynton

Just when one begins to believe that a firm understanding of western art may be had by viewing the works of Frederic Remington, Alfred Jacob Miller, Henry Farny, Charles M. Russell, and a score of other well-known artists of the frontier, the unique experience of viewing a canvas by Grace Carpenter Hudson (1865–1937) occurs.

The mainstream of traditional western art focused on the new lords of the land: the trappers, cowboys, settlers, and miners. Remarkable scenic vistas or graceful wild creatures formed the subject matter of still other artists' canvases. More rarely, a painterly Indian people were drawn: staunch prairie tribes in times of peace or war. But none of these prepare the viewer for a first glimpse of Grace Carpenter Hudson's brushwork.

In a remarkable series of canvases, Hudson captured the spirit of northern California's Pomo Indians. Vibrant with color, stunning in technique, yet filled with the reality of everyday activities, her paintings fill a void in our understanding of the West.

Born to a photographer father and a schoolteacher mother, Grace

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*This article has been adapted from material in Searles R. Boynton's* The Painter Lady: Grace Carpenter Hudson, *being published this fall by Interface California Corporation, Eureka.*
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PRIVATE COLLECTION

PAINTED 1896

PRIVATE COLLECTION

PAINTED 1935

## Basket Baby

*"While mother Indian gathers acorns, baby Qui-bo and Shuf are left in a little dell to be safe and out of the way."* THIS AND OTHER QUOTATIONS ARE FROM THE ARTIST'S OWN DESCRIPTIONS OF HER PAINTINGS

## The Seed Conjurer

*(Preceding Page)*

*A young Pomo Indian plays an elderberry flute before a small ceremonial fire. His elaborate headdress, animal-fur tunic, and feathered skirt with beaded waistband reveal the subtlety of the tribe's handicrafts.*

PRIVATE COLLECTION

PAINTED 1919

## The Foxes

*"When Kole-Pi-Ta had the measles, she was peevish, restless, and hard to please, until old Grandfather brought in a fox 'kitten.' By the time Kole-Pi-Ta had recovered, the fox was named Con-Cu and established as a member of the family under the protection of her indulgent parents. . . ."*

Carpenter was raised in the wilderness settlements of Potter Valley and Ukiah, home of the Pomo Indians. When she had completed the meager schooling the region offered, she attended normal school in San Francisco and then studied art at that city's California School of Design. By the middle of her second year at art school, she had already distinguished herself from the more than eighty pupils in attendance. Winning a coveted gold medal for her crayon study of a plaster cast, she gained the praise of her teachers and fellow students.

Following her graduation from the School of Design, she returned to Ukiah. Within a year of her 1891 marriage to John Hudson, a medical doctor, she completed her first major canvas. Typical of many of her later paintings, it depicted an Indian infant sleeping in a cradleboard basket. When H. Jay Smith, a collector for the Minneapolis Art Association, saw the canvas, though it was in an unfinished state, he added it to his purchases from the region. The painting soon won strong praise in Minneapolis, as did many of Hudson's subsequent works.

Without doubt her greatest popular success was another painting of

PRIVATE COLLECTION

PAINTED 1944

COLLECTION OF THE CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PAINTED 1900

## Head of John Jakes' Father

*Kol-Ba, an elderly Pomo Indian chief, poses for the artist with a fur cape, wampum necklace, and a pepperwood wreath about his head.*

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## Kol-Pi-Ta

*(Opposite)*

*"She was the last of the old line of Indian medicine women, and I do not believe there will be another to take her place. Ideas, even among the Indians, are changing rapidly these days."*

PRIVATE COLLECTION

PAINTED 1934

## *Cha-bok and Kay-Kay-Pun*

*Seated in front of the sweathouse, Pete McClure takes a respite from wampum-making while Mollie Duncan weaves a basket from willow sprouts.*

a Pomo child, *Little Mendocino*. Perhaps no other work by a California artist has created as much interest as did this 1893 painting, now in the collection of the California Historical Society. First exhibited at the twenty-seventh annual Midwinter Fair in San Francisco, the portrait of a crying basket-baby drew such crowds that it was moved to the main gallery from its first location in a remote corner. Its popular success prompted other gallery showings in the years that followed, including the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago.

In a career that spanned more than forty-five years, Grace Hudson painted 684 oils, plus numerous oil and bitumen sketches, watercolors, and a few charcoal drawings. Without question, all were influenced by her husband's avocations, ethnology and anthropology. Most of her major works include renderings of the Pomo basketry, garmets, or household objects that held so much interest for John Hudson. Together the couple devoted much of their lives to documenting and collecting the handicrafts and other artifacts of this dying Indian tribe.

PRIVATE COLLECTION

PAINTED 1897

## The Empty Basket

*A bereaved Pomo Indian mother, followed by a funeral procession and carrying her baby's empty cradle-basket, proceeds to the river to sink the basket as a symbolic farewell.*

Continuing to paint until the year of her death, Hudson documented most aspects of everyday Pomo Indian life. Cooking, hunting, fishing, seed gathering, basket-making, dancing, funerals, and newborn babies—all may be found in her oil paintings. Drawing from life, she captured nuances of detail and expression that are the envy of many artists today. Yet despite the virtuoso technique, the pictures remain simple and charming, delightful to the eye.

Today her wealth of paintings hang in many major public and private collections, including the Oakland Museum, the California Historical Society, the Los Angeles County Art Museum, the Palm Springs Desert Museum, and the Smithsonian. Recognized in her own lifetime for her unique contribution to the art of the West and for her uncanny eye for realism, Grace Carpenter Hudson is being rediscovered today to the surprise and delight of those who thought they understood the full scope of western art.

**Searles R. Boynton** *is an orthodontic specialist who resides in Ukiah, California. A Grace Carpenter Hudson enthusiast, he has devoted much of the past seven years to researching the life and life-work of this artist.*

PRIVATE COLLECTION

PAINTED 1913

## Col-Lip-Win

*"A wandering fisher boy, Col-Lip-Win has no abiding place, staying with relatives or friends, or wherever he can find shelter. Sometimes he wanders as far as Round Valley, sixty-five miles distant. . . ."*

## The Oracle of the Leaves

*(Opposite)*

*"The Pomo Indians believe that there is a day each year when the leaves talk. In the late autumn, when the acorns are ripe, the Western Spirit sends little gusts of wind to scatter the dry leaves, which whisper softly of coming events as they fall. . . . The girls and young wives linger late in the forest, each seeking the answer to the wish of her heart."*

PRIVATE COLLECTION

PAINTED 1918

# An Informal Chronicle of the WESTERN HISTORY ASSOCIATION

THE PLACE AND TIME when the Western History Association, the official sponsor of *The American West,* was conceived can be plotted with surprising accuracy. In July 1958, two young historians, John Alexander Carroll, who was driving westward from Texas to a new post at the University of Arizona, and John Porter Bloom, who was then on the staff of Texas Western College, met in El Paso to cement a new-found friendship over an excellent green chili dinner. Both were passionately interested in western history; both were aware that since 1944 their fellow enthusiasts had been forming "corrals" of "Westerners" to provide a congenial setting for discussions of the frontier past. Why not gather these buffs and a few professional historians in a national conference where they could share their enthusiasms and ideas? No such gathering had been held since one at the University of Colorado in 1929, and interest in the West had multiplied rapidly since then.

As the two corresponded over the next months, between themselves and with a widening circle of fellow western-history buffs, a "Committee of Seven" gradually evolved, with Carroll and K. Ross Toole of the Museum of New Mexico as its chairmen, and with Bloom, Donald C. Cutter of the University of Southern California, Walter Rundell, Jr., of Texas Woman's University, Robert M. Utley of the National Park Service, and Edgar I. Stewart of Eastern Washington State College as members. Gradually, too, their plans took shape: they would invite some of the hundreds of persons "known to be deeply interested in the American West as a field of research and interpretation" to a "Conference on the History of Western America," to meet in Santa Fe between October 12 and 14, 1961. The weather was sure to be good in New Mexico at that time of year, there were no other academic conferences scheduled to compete for customers, and Robert Utley, who was then stationed at Santa Fe with the National Park Service, was willing to do much of the local organizational work.

Invitations went out that summer, handsomely printed by Paul D. Bailey, whose Westernlore Press was celebrating its twentieth anniversary, inviting writers and researchers, publishers and book people, librarians and archivists, "Westerners" and professors, to gather at the La Fonda Inn. The bait displayed in the program was attractive enough: seventeen papers and addresses to be delivered by some of the nation's most eminent historians of the West, together with a special display of western art at the Museum of New Mexico and an assortment of social and historical events certain to gladden the heart of any true western buff. "We hope," read the announcement from the Committee of Seven, "that the trail we have blazed to the Plaza of Santa Fe will bring historical traders from many places, and that they will have a considerable cargo of facts and ideas for the market-place of knowledge."

Arrangements completed, the committee members sat back to wait, wondering whether their appeal would draw twenty or thirty or perhaps even fifty of the faithful to Santa Fe. If sixty responded, they agreed, they would count the conference a success. To their delighted amazement, more than three hundred from twenty-four states, Mexico, Canada, and the District of Columbia were on hand for the opening sessions, crowding the lobbies of the La Fonda Inn, taxing the seating capacity of the conference rooms, examining (and buying) the books on the West displayed by publishers, and enjoying the unusual experience of rubbing shoulders —and minds—with others who saw the American West as the most fascinating place in the world.

Those were memorable days, particularly for those of us who arrived from east of the Mississippi. Santa Fe was rich in the tradition and romance of the frontier; New Mexico donned its most spectacular autumnal robes and paraded its most invigorating weather. How we thrilled as we sniffed the intoxicating air or roamed about the venerable plaza or bartered with genuine Indians who displayed their goods beneath the arches of the Palace of the Governors. The con-

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA, PHILADELPHIA

by Ray A. Billington

ference organizers had persuaded several affluent Santa Feans to open their homes to the group for predinner festivities, assuming that thirty or forty would attend. Those generous hosts must have suffered agonies when three hundred thirsty souls appeared on their doorsteps, but all responded with true western hospitality, while we discovered that bourbon tasted just as good in jelly glasses as in crystal goblets.

And the beauty of that autumn countryside . . . One of our hosts was General Patrick J. Hurley, whose palatial home was perched high in the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, with a sweeping view of the valley below. As we watched the sun descended, turning the golden aspens into flame against the green of the pines and bathing all the world in the splendor of a sunset that touched us with awe. Even professors forgot to drink as they stood enraptured. Any conference offering such delights was sure to succeed.

This one did, so completely that all agreed a second must be held. This meant some form of organization, for a meeting site must be selected, invitations distributed, money raised, and participants recruited for a program of talks and papers. Before the Santa Fe Conference adjourned we gathered in the auditorium of the Museum of New Mexico for an uproarious "business meeting" in which parliamentary rules were forgotten, the strategy planned by the Committee of Seven shouted down, and a rough organization endorsed by popular acclaim. This centered about an "Organizing Committee" authorized to plan a 1962 gathering with a wider geographic distribution than the Santa Fe meeting. I found myself involved at this point as president pro tem of the hazy organization that we were already calling the Western History Association, for the founders insisted that an elder statesman was required to restore at least a modicum of dignity to the process.

Much of that year went into negotiations with a Denver hotel for a 1962 meeting site, soliciting members, arranging a program, and drafting a constitution; by the end of summer we felt that all was in readiness for a meeting that might even rival the one at Santa Fe. Then disaster struck. Just weeks before we were to assemble, our hotel was swept by fire. What a bustle of activity that tragedy touched off, as local enthusiasts searched for a new site and telephone lines hummed with negotiations as we altered arrangements to meet the emergency. Fortunately the Denver Hilton was able to take us in, even though other conferences were scheduled for the same period and some of our sessions would have to be held in makeshift rooms separated only by curtains. By the opening day more than four hundred were on hand, their enthusiasm fired by the near-disaster that had almost doomed the Western History Association at its borning, ready for another three days of companionship and learning.

ONE AMAZING INCIDENT during those days brought us even closer together. Professor Doyce Nunis was holding an overflow audience entranced in a session on the fur trade when a young man strode down the aisle, turned to face the crowd, extended his arms, and announced: "I am Jesus Christ, your Savior." In the eloquent silence that followed, the presiding officer, Professor LeRoy R. Hafen, rose to the occasion superbly. Putting his arm around the young man, he led him to the nearest elevator and arranged for his ascent—not to Heaven but to the religious conference meeting on the floor above. Discussion of the fur trade went on, but so did the stories that were exchanged as we gathered afterward. Professor John F. Bannon, S.J., of St. Louis University was said to have remarked: "If I had known the Boss was to be here I would have . . ." And Professor Hafen, then of Brigham Young University, was alleged to have said: "They have been telling us in Salt Lake City this was going to happen, but I never thought it would take place in Denver." Apocryphal, of course, and perhaps not as funny as we thought then, but those anecdotes helped cement our burgeoning friendships and firm our desire to assure permanence for the Western History Association.

That was the purpose of the business meeting to consider the constitution prepared by a special committee. For a time even this was threatened as a right-minded member moved that the constitution be rejected, all officers dismissed, and the gathering return to the chaotic informality that had made the Santa Fe convention such a delight. Most of us agreed with him, but necessity ruled and the new constitution was adopted by acclamation. Well it might be, for it made clear that the Western History Association was to be no stodgy academic society ruled by professors concerned only with their own publish-or-perish ambitions. Its purpose, said the constitution, was "to promote the study of the American West in all its varied aspects." This meant that professional historians would be welcomed, of course, but so would anthropologists, ethnohistorians, archivists, librarians, economists, laborers in state historical societies, students of literature, and above all the so-called "amateur" scholars who had proven their interest—and skills—by active participation in Westerner corrals. This was the new association's most important decision, for traditionally "amateurs" and "professionals" had been as irreconcilable as cowboys and sheepherders. In the Western History Association each group found the other had much to offer, not only in companionship but in the study of the frontier past. The wedding of the two has made meetings of the association unique and delightful experiences.

*Continued on page 66*

THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE

# Pioneer Conservationist A. P. Hill: *"He Saved the Redwoods"*

## by Victoria Thomas Olson

IN THE WINTER of 1900, Andrew Putnam Hill, a forty-six-year-old artist and professional photographer, took the train up from San Jose to the rustic mountain town of Felton in the California Coast Range some seventy-five miles south of San Francisco. There Hill, a dignified, thickly bearded man with great physical presence, a penetrating gaze, and a keen sense of the aesthetic, planned to take pictures of the huge, shaggy-barked redwood trees that dominated the region. These photographs were to for a London magazine, and they would give readers of Victorian England some idea of the grandeur and immensity of a redwood forest.

But the assignment did not go entirely as Hill had expected. He had little trouble setting up his cumbersome equipment in a clearing, but just as he finished some exposures of the towering trees, a man stepped out of the forest dimness. He declared himself to be J. W. Welch, the owner of Santa Cruz Big Trees Grove, as he called the forest area Hill had chosen to photograph. Then he demanded Hill's photographic plates.

"When Mr. Welch came," Hill later wrote of the incident, "he was very disturbed to learn that I had photographed the trees and told me that no photographs of them were allowed." In the discussion that followed, Hill discovered that Welch was not only charging admission to see the grove and running a resort hotel nearby, but he was also chopping up some of the redwoods for railroad ties.

Hill was outraged. He realized clearly that "these trees, because of their size and antiquity, were among the natural wonders of the world, and should be saved for posterity. Thus was born my idea of saving the redwoods."

Today Andrew P. Hill's name is almost unknown except among conservationists; when he died in 1922, he had only a worthless gold mine and less than $900 to his name. But it was he who took the first vital steps toward saving the coast redwoods: his persistent campaign led not only to the creation of the Sempervirens Club to protect the trees for future generations but also to the acquisition of Big Basin, not far from Felton, and its establishment as the first park in the present California state park system.

ANDREW HILL was born in Pleasant Township, Indiana. His family was intensely proud of its pioneer heritage; Hill himself once wrote of their propensity to do battle, "Guess it is in the breed." Andrew's father, Elijah Putnam Hill, had moved to Indiana as a young man, bought furs briefly for the Hudson's Bay Company, married Jenny Rose in 1850, and then once again caught the westering fever. Jenny was carrying Elijah's child when he left her in the spring of 1853 to go to California by ox train. She was never to see her husband again. Elijah Hill was attacked by hostile Indians and died a week later in the small gold-rush town of Amador City, California.

The lure of the West was not lost on Elijah's only child Andrew. When he was just fourteen he took the treacherous shortcut across the disease-ridden Isthmus of Panama to travel to California with an uncle. Although he was not a Catholic, he soon enrolled in the small Catholic College of Santa Clara, south of San Francisco.

Stories of the redwoods and the wildlife that flourished at their feet—the tawny mountain lion, the great grizzly bear, and the shy Columbia blacktail deer—soon filled Andrew's head. When he studied map making under an experienced mapmaker in the area, the man quickly recognized Hill's natural artistic ability and encouraged him to become an artist. Many years later, Hill fondly recalled how he was soon sketching and painting the magnificent redwoods in remote and nearly inaccessible regions of the California Coast Range.

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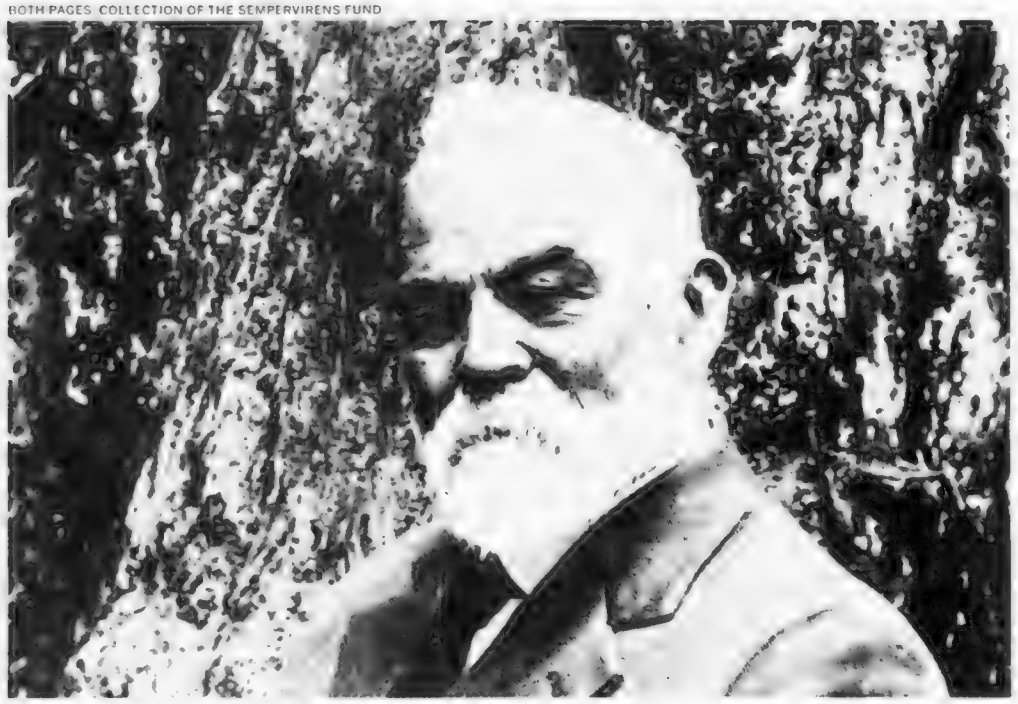
*Early conservationist Andrew Putnam Hill, photographed beside one of the towering redwoods in the California state park he helped establish, made it his life's work to save these giant trees from destruction.*



COLLECTION OF THE SEMPERVIRENS FUND

FATHER TREE

BOTH PAGES COLLECTION OF THE SEMPERVIRENS FUND



*Arriving in California at age fourteen, A. P. Hill was a successful artist and photographer in the years before he became an active conservationist.*

Hill's skill as an artist grew in the 1870s as he studied art at the California School of Design in San Francisco and then painted several large canvasses of harvest scenes, missions, pioneers, governors, and senators. The portraits of three Nevada politicians were painted by Hill for the Nevada State Capitol Building. In 1878 Hill moved to San Jose, opened a portrait studio, and began to teach art. He also found time to paint "Mission Santa Clara" and "The Murphy Party," the latter depicting the first pioneers to climb Sunset Pass from Donner Lake in 1844. This painting won a California State Fair Gold Medal in 1890 and was purchased by the California Pioneers' Association, only to be destroyed sixteen years later in the San Francisco earthquake.

In 1883, Hill took time out from his classes and commissions to court and marry Florence Maria Watkins, the daughter of a San Jose orchardist whose decision to leave the Donner Party in 1846 quite probably saved him from death. The *San Jose Daily Morning Times* of April 4, 1883, described the new Mrs. A. P. Hill, a former schoolteacher, as "a young lady of many accomplishments of mind and person."

As his family grew (Andrew Putnam, Jr., was born in 1886 and Frank Ernest in 1888), A. P. Hill also developed a thriving business as a photographer: his advertisement described him as a "portrait painter and photographic artist." During these years, Hill captured many of the region's attractions on photographic plates, including Mount Hamilton, Stanford University, the towns of Palo Alto and San Jose, and Senator Leland Stanford's splendid horses. Hill's studio work prospered, and his photographs appeared in books, magazines, and newspapers, and were displayed at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Eventually over three hundred of his pictures were used by publications throughout the world.

Yet this one assignment—to photograph redwood trees for a London magazine—prompted Andrew Hill to set aside a promising career as an artist and photographer to fight for the trees themselves.

BY THE TURN OF THE CENTURY when A. P. Hill resolved to save the coast redwoods, commercial cutting had been going on in the Coast Range for over sixty years. The completion of the transcontinental railroad and of a Southern Pacific branch line through the Felton–Big Basin area had increased lumbering in the vicinity; before 1900 the giant Big Basin Lumber Company of Boulder Creek, representing a merger of the twenty-eight sawmills of the region, was filling up to 150 railcars with lumber each day. So many trees were being cut down that the old-growth redwoods in the area were in danger of total destruction.

Throughout the United States, however, a gradual change in attitude toward the natural environment was occurring. One important group began to advocate the protection and preservation of the nation's natural resources which, they argued, should not be left to exploitation without government regulation. These were the commodity conservationists, with utilitarian ideas perhaps best expressed by forestry-management expert Gifford Pinchot, whose view is still foremost today: "the use of natural resources for the greatest good of the greatest number for the longest time." Pinchot saw the job "as not to stop the axe, but to regulate its use."

To the ambitious "cut-and-get-out" lumber entrepreneurs, the idea that logging under laissez-faire conditions should cease was radical enough, yet aesthetic conserva-

*On May 1, 1900, A. P. Hill photographed his fellow committee members at Stanford University as they gathered to form a plan for saving the redwoods.*

tionists like John Muir and Andrew Hill were prepared to take the idea even further. Muir and the Sierra Club he founded in 1892 and Hill and the organization he would soon initiate to save the coast redwoods set out to stop the use of the axe entirely in certain areas. Trees to these protectors of the wilderness solitude were not timber to be managed for future harvest; instead they formed the great primeval forest and should be left to grow, to hold the mountains together, to replenish the groundwater, and to enrich the human spirit.

Thus it was in the first year of the twentieth century that Andrew P. Hill stood in a redwood forest among cathedral columns some twenty centuries old and vowed to convince others of their value not in board feet but in overwhelming beauty.

Hill wasted no time in starting his campaign—even on the train ride from Felton back to San Jose he enlisted the eager support of a fellow passenger and friend, Judge John E. Richards. Hill's enthusiasm and determination were contagious: Judge Richards quickly wrote an article in defense of the redwoods which was published on March 7, 1900, in the *San Jose Herald*. Meanwhile, Hill contacted another friend by letter, and Josephine McCrackin's article describing Hill's untoward encounter with Welch also appeared on March 7 in the *Santa Cruz Sentinel*. She wrote in part, "I think we all agree with Mr. Hill when he says that the course this gentleman takes is utterly un-American; and I add that it is un-Californian."

Ten days later an editorial in the *Santa Cruz Surf* urged the preservation of the redwoods of the area, pointing out that Congress was at that time establishing sanctuary for the bulky but commercially unsuitable Sierra big trees (now known as *Sequoiadendron giganteum)* of Calaveras. The editorial went on to say that it was "now or never"; the reapers were almost ready and within two years would cut over this still untouched haven for the coast redwood.

Meanwhile Hill himself wrote letters and then an article for the *Sentinel;* he also persuaded the Santa Cruz and San Jose boards of trade (now chambers of commerce) to pass resolutions asking Congress to establish a park. Yet it seemed almost too late.

On May 1, 1900, more than a dozen people fired by Hill's enthusiasm gathered together in the Stanford University library in nearby Palo Alto for the purpose of saving the coast redwood trees. At that time the advantages of acquiring the adjacent and more impressive Big Basin area for a park, instead of trying to purchase J. W. Welch's Santa Cruz Big Trees Grove in Felton, were pointed out by Dr. David Starr Jordan, president of the university, and by several Stanford professors who had recently explored, surveyed, and mapped Big Basin. Hill had already heard that a Santa Cruz botanist, Dr. C. L. Anderson, had suggested Big Basin to the Santa Cruz Board of Trade in lieu of the Felton grove, saying that "as your enthusiasm is for these smaller trees, so it will grow in proportion to the size, grandeur, and vastness of those in Big Basin."

Two of the people at the Stanford meeting, A. P. Hill and Carrie Stevens Walter, then selected a committee to explore Big Basin and report on it. The rich forest floor of the Basin, constantly fed by life-giving streams, had produced some of the largest and mightiest redwoods in the vicinity—yet the area would cost even less to buy than the forest land near Felton. But its suitability as a park site had to be determined first.

On May 15, 1900, Hill and Carrie Stevens Walter were joined by W. W. Richards (Judge Richards's son), R. S.

BOTH PAGES, COLLECTION OF THE SEMPERVIRENS FUND

*The pioneer conservationists pausing here for Hill's camera spent several idyllic days exploring Big Basin to determine its suitability as a public park.*

Kooser, and Louise C. Jones. They travelled together by train to Boulder Creek, where they met J. F. Coope and J. Q. Packard, both from Santa Cruz; Andy Baldwin, who was to be their guide; and Thomas Croon, the cook. San Francisco Supervisor Charles W. Reed would join them eventually, along with H. L. Middleton, the largest stockholder of the Big Basin Lumber Company.

A horse-drawn wagon then carried Andrew P. Hill, his fellow conservationists, and their provisions down the rutted, bumpy logging road and over the sunlit, poppy-strewn rim into Big Basin. Not very far from this point, one of the mills owned by the company had already set up machinery, which had been hauled over the mountains by mule. As the Boulder Creek *Mountain Echo* had commented ten days earlier, "The movement [to save the redwoods] has commenced none too soon, as arrangements have already been perfected to begin cutting the very heart out of this timber tract."

Before long the group was setting up camp at Slippery Rock, a long, fairly smooth outcropping of stone left on the steep mountainside by the Ice Age glaciers which had crowded the redwoods almost to the brink of the Pacific one million years before. Slippery Rock was the economic hub of Big Basin and the center of activity for stripping bark from the tan oak and hauling it to Santa Cruz for use in curing leather. For the committee encamped by the rock under the giant trees and within sight and sound of Sempervirens Creek, it was to be home for the next three days.

AT FIRST OPPORTUNITY, the pioneer conservationists set out to explore this wilderness tapestry. No trail then ran through this part of the Basin, but to the seven men, two women, and someone's lop-eared, speckled dog, this only added to their pleasure. The sharp, clean smell of the forest surrounded them, and they filled their lungs with cool, sweet air. Andy Baldwin strode in the lead, the reddish forest litter crackling under his feet. The two women wore wide-brimmed hats and light shirtwaists, and they had to lift their long, flowing skirts discreetly several times to keep from tripping as they hiked. Hill himself somehow managed to carry his large camera and tripod, for he meant to photograph this day for posterity.

They hiked along the ridge between two cascading creeks: Sempervirens Creek flowed on one side, tumbling in a gossamer waterfall at one point into a luminous, pewter-colored pool; while Opal Creek, with its natural opalescent color, burbled along the other side of the ridge. The hikers followed Baldwin in rough single file, some carrying walking sticks, picking their way through duff that had been accumulating on the forest floor for hundreds of years.

Spring had come to the woods, the first spring of a new century for these trees that were centuries old. Ethereal sunlight shone about their crowns and broke through to light the forest floor with brilliance. Tiny trilliums like pale, three-pointed stars burst into exuberant bloom in the undergrowth, and perfectly symmetrical mushrooms, *Amanita* and *Stropharia,* thrived on the rich forest floor under airy five-finger ferns and tightly curled crosiers of deer's-tongue.

Douglas fir, tan oak, live oak, wax myrtle, madrone, California bay, and twisted, red-skinned manzanita began to give way to almost pure stands of redwood as the little group of pioneers travelled down the ridge. Straight colonnades of magnificent redwoods soared to the sky. The dense canopy of trees now plunged much of the forest

*The Sempervirens Club, formed around a campfire in 1900, was instrumental in establishing Big Basin as California's first coastal redwood sanctuary.*

floor into deep shade, where little fiddleheads of sword and polypody ferns unfurled into dancing fronds; but here and there sunlight fell in pools, and huckleberries, thimbleberries, snowberries, and California hazel grew profusely.

Still the group of men and women hiked onward, filled with wonder. Topknotted and tiny quail alike skittered through the luxuriant undergrowth; rabbits bounded off into redwood sorrel and wild ginger. Baldwin led the party down off the ridge and onto the flat in the heart of Big Basin. Here they could see where winter floods had rampaged against the trees, burying their delicate roots beneath rich alluvial deposits as much as eight or ten feet thick. And they could see where fire had swept through the forest, burning off the detritus and leaving some trees with their two-foot-thick bark barely singed by the holocaust and others with their very heartwood burned out, yet still alive.

Deeper and deeper into the forest strode the small group of trailblazers, their spirits rising with anticipation. The resilient and remarkably hardy redwoods loomed all about them, with textured, tannin-reddened bark virtually immune to insects, disease, decay, and fungi. The voices of A. P. Hill and his travelling companions carried above the crunch of their footsteps and lifted beyond the raucous cries of the blue jays into the lofty silence of the tremendous trees.

Baldwin more than once pointed out the extraordinary regenerative powers of the redwood, proof that it was truly *Sequoia sempervirens,* "ever-living." Wherever a tree, centuries-old, had toppled to erosion, storm, or wind, the defiant, feathery young sprouts soon poked their way out of the soil and into the new light streaming through the rent in the great forest canopy. Slowly, over the centuries, the fittest of these had formed a ring of massive cathedral columns—sometimes called "fairy circles" or "goose pens" by the early pioneers.

The nine hikers at last reached what they had come so far to see. The deepest forest lay before them, a resplendent stand of furrowed and hoary ancients lit by a few shafts of glimmering light piercing through the green mosaic stillness. They walked among several of these exceptional and enormous trees—a ring of redwoods now referred to as the Compass Group—and came finally to the base of a tree that was truly immense, its great shaggy-barked bole shooting skyward above them some three hundred feet or more.

"As we emerged into the opening before this tree," A. P. Hill later wrote of that day, "I noticed the members of our group looking at this giant with open mouths, and suddenly I became aware of being in the same condition!"

For the next few days the nine, with increasing awe, explored the forest. A. P. Hill often photographed a huge redwood tree with his relatively puny human companions grouped about its base or took off alone on a jaunt of picture-taking. Deeply immersed in his photography, Hill lost contact with the others on May 17, and the group reported him missing. He soon recovered his bearings and returned to camp, but by then the San Jose and Santa Cruz newspapers had taken up the sensational story of his "mysterious disappearance." Hill and his companions enjoyed a good laugh, and "all agreed that it was not every man who was fortunate enough to read his own obituary."

Before the flickering glow of their campfire on the night of May 18, 1900, A. P. Hill organized this small group of men and women into the Sempervirens Club, *sempervirens* for the "ever-living" coast *Sequoia,* and, passing

the hat, collected thirty-two dollars toward the establishment of Big Basin as a redwood sanctuary. Even H. L. Middleton, the lumber-company stockholder, had caught the spirit of this redwood-saving crowd. They would save not only the redwoods but the entire environment: the bandit-faced raccoons and the timid deer, the abundantly blooming azaleas and the sassy blue jays. They were determined to have Big Basin purchased as a public park.

THE NEWLY FORMED SEMPERVIRENS CLUB was persistent and vocal. The club decided to appeal to the California legislature instead of Congress, so that the Calaveras Big Trees bill then before Congress would not be jeopardized. (As it turned out, sanctuary, and a state sanctuary at that, for these Sierra trees was not established until 1931, and only after two hard-fought campaigns and a donation of $2 million from John D. Rockefeller, Jr. South Grove, the last section of Calaveras Big Trees State Park, was not dedicated until 1967.)

San Francisco Supervisor Charles W. Reed was chosen to author the bill proposing the creation of the "California Redwood Park," and Assemblyman George H. Fisk of San Francisco introduced the bill (A B 200) on January 15, 1901. The possible purchase of Big Basin as a park in a state that had never before purchased a park became a controversial issue, and newspapers and magazines gave the idea all the publicity it needed.

Ironically, John Muir (an honorary vice-president of the Sempervirens Club) and the Sierra Club were then in the midst of a fifteen-year battle to have Yosemite, which had been granted to the state by Abraham Lincoln in 1864, "receded" to the federal government. Muir felt that because Californians were not appreciative enough of unspoiled wilderness areas, Yosemite required federal protection. When in 1906 Yosemite at last became a national park, he was to write jubilantly, "Sound the loud timbrel and let every Yosemite tree and stream rejoice."

But the Sempervirens Club, believing as much in Californians as they believed in California redwoods, put their bill before the state legislature. As introduced, it required the creation of a Redwood Park Commission and $250,000 in state funds toward the purchase of the acreage chosen. Hearings were held while the bill was reviewed by the Committee on Public Lands and Forests, and supporters from San Jose, Stanford University, the University of Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz spoke so persuasively in favor of the park that the committee sent the bill back to the assembly with a "do pass" recommendation. But when the assembly Ways and Means Committee reviewed the bill, it decided against the expenditure, returning the bill with a "do not pass" recommendation on February 8, 1901.

When the discouraged members of the Sempervirens Club held their next meeting in San Francisco, it was Andrew Hill who refused to give up hope while others thought the project a failure. Hill had taken a multitude of pictures of the giant trees, sometimes using a great burned-out hollow redwood called the Mother of the Forest as his darkroom, and now he journeyed to Sacramento to show the photographs to a largely indifferent legislature.

Lieutenant Governor Alden Anderson, however, was able to help Hill by suggesting changes in the bill to get it through the Ways and Means Committee and by recommending a politician, Grove L. Johnson, who eventually sponsored the bill for Hill. In the rewritten version, the acquisition of the park land would be spread over a five-year period, costing the state $50,000 a year until the $250,000 total was paid; the proposed park had specified boundaries; and the title search would be performed before the purchase. With these changes the bill was favorably received on the assembly floor.

Hill then discovered that a group of legislators in control required a $5,000 bribe to "push" the bill to establish Big Basin as a state park—money which the Sempervirens Club did not have and would not pay. Hill reasoned that while the group had no funds, they had many friends, and these he decided to call upon in his fight to save the trees. After careful consideration, he approached his friend Rev. Robert E. Kenna, S.J., then president of the University of Santa Clara, to ask for the support of the Catholic church. He hoped that the church's approval of the bill for the park would swing the votes of the Catholic minority in the senate and the assembly. Father Kenna was soon convinced that the bill was a worthy cause, and after a committee of fellow Catholics explored Big Basin, the drive was on in congregations all over the state. Father Kenna made many impassioned speeches imploring that Big Basin be saved for posterity. San Francisco attorney D. M. Delmas, a brilliant orator, also spoke on behalf of the redwood forest, for "man's work, if destroyed, man may again replace. God's work God alone can re-create."

Several legislators now told Hill that they would vote in favor of the bill only if the Sempervirens Club could extend the existing option on Big Basin to make sure that by the time legislative action finally took place, the proposed park would not have already been cut over by the lumber company. (And such an extension did indeed turn out to be necessary.) Hill consequently journeyed to San Francisco to meet with stockholder H. L. Middleton, who was acting on behalf of the company. Middleton in turn asked that a guarantee be made that the owners would receive from some source the first $50,000 payment of the five yearly payments if the state failed to pay on time. Hill gave his word that Middleton would have this guarantee by midnight.

*Like Andrew P. Hill and other early conservationists, visitors today are awed by the magnificent redwoods preserved in Big Basin; this recent photograph depicts a portion of the park's resplendent Compass Group.*

ALEXANDER LOWRY

Hill then caught a train south to try to make good his promise. First he tried President Jordan at Stanford University, but there was nothing Jordan could do. Hill next appealed to Father Kenna at the University of Santa Clara, who with the help of his philanthropic nephew, San Francisco Mayor James Phelan, was able to give Hill the guarantee. Relieved, Hill telephoned Middleton to tell him the news.

Hill then walked the five miles from Santa Clara to the office of the *San Jose Mercury* where, at one o'clock in the morning, he convinced the editor that a special edition was necessary to tell the legislators that the new option had been obtained. Hill himself wrote the editorial, caught the milk train to Sacramento at four-thirty in the morning, and put a newspaper on each legislator's desk before the morning session. Of fifty-six votes in the assembly that day, only one was against the bill. Father Kenna's earnest address before the senate resulted in an almost unanimous vote in favor of the bill.

Yet many of the bill's legislative opponents had voted for the bill simply because the park issue seemed a popular one with the public. These legislators never once believed that such a pie-in-the-sky, frivolous measure—spending a quarter of a million dollars so that people could tramp around under redwood trees!—would ever be signed by the governor. As for Governor Henry Gage himself, he had already pledged to keep costs down. The only way that was possible was for him to choose between signing the redwood park bill and a water and power measure supported by a strong lobby. The park bill's opponents, exerting a great deal of pressure, tried to persuade the governor that the park would be a foolish expenditure.

But Hill, who had expected the governor to waver, had been scrimping with a cheap room and fifteen-cent meals to save enough to telegraph the friends of the redwood trees all over the state. In response to Hill's plea for help, letters, telegrams, and telephone calls flooded the governor's office, ample proof of public interest in the preservation of the redwoods. Governor Gage at last signed the bill on March 16, 1901.

FOUR THOUSAND ACRES of redwoods (of which Middleton donated two hundred) thus became California's first Sacramento-legislated state park. The park was then called California Redwood Park, and in accordance with Sempervirens Club ideals that anticipated Big Basin's role today as the clean air standard for surrounding cities, the park was dedicated "to prepare a place whither our children and workmen, factory girls and others breathing all the week impure air, might, amidst the great trees and along rippling brooks, breathe pure air and rest amidst great forests, where their minds and hearts are lifted to higher, purer, nobler things."

Today the trees still stand in the bowl-shaped watershed called Big Basin, part of a verdant five-hundred mile strip of redwoods that runs almost continuously along the fog-cooled Pacific Coast from below Big Sur, south of Monterey, up just into Oregon. The redwood forests thrive along the mountainsides of the Coast Range up to an altitude of about three thousand feet, overlooking the shimmering, gray-green swells of the ocean. For twenty to thirty miles inland, as far as the fog drifts, the rich soil holds out, and the abundant rains pour down, these magnificent giants flourish, shooting skyward as high as three hundred sixty feet.

Of the original two million acres of coast redwood trees left after the Ice Age to awe Indian and Spaniard alike, almost 100,000 acres are now in the hands of logging companies and some 68,000 untouched acres are protected in state and national parks. In little over a century, more than 1.7 million acres of coast redwood trees were cut down. But with the establishment of a park in Big Basin, a commission to oversee it, and the eventual network of state and national parks, the redwood trees which had outlived the dinosaurs and outlasted the glaciers may also survive the human race.

Judge A. L. Rhodes reportedly once told A. P. Hill: "You are a comparatively young man. Make it your life's work to save these trees. You can do nothing greater for your country." Hill did, indeed, make the redwood trees his life's work. After the formation of the park, he spent as much time there as possible, grappling with park problems (including forest fire, swindle, and corruption), painting, and taking picture after picture of the great trees. A rustic studio for his use was even built there in 1918. But by then his health was failing. In spite of treatments by radio vibrations, he died at the age of sixty-nine, early in the morning of September 3, 1922.

Perhaps the best measure of a man, like that of a tree, is taken when he falls. Andrew Putnam Hill's last words to his wife were, "Florence, I don't want to die! This is too soon. I have work to do!" His ashes were scattered in the heart of Big Basin, under the resplendent trees that in part because of his efforts remain *sempervirens*—everliving, everlasting, and evergreen.

*Editor's Note: September 24 marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of Big Basin State Park. To celebrate this occasion, the Sempervirens Fund has recently set aside magnificent Founders' Grove in memory of Andrew P. Hill and his early conservationist colleagues. Reactivated in 1968 with current headquarters at 2483 Old Middlefield Way in Mountain View, California, the Sempervirens Fund is the modern descendant of Hill's original Sempervirens Club. In recent years the Fund has helped purchase 2,670 acres of land for Big Basin and nearby Castle Rock state parks, and is presently conducting an intensive campaign to raise more than a million dollars for the purchase of 2,500 additional acres for the two parks.*

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# OREGON YESTERDAYS

SOUTH APPROACH TO MOUNT HOOD

## A Backward Glance at Northwestern Oregon, 1905-15, through the Photographs of George M. Weister

Narrative by Elizabeth W. Buehler

# The Oregon of George M. Weister . . .

COLUMBIA RIVER OVERLOOK

When George M. Weister photographed burgeoning northwest Oregon during the early years of this century, his camera recorded a time of rapid change. As countless new settlers arrived to share the bright future of this frontier land, it began to acquire the trappings of twentieth-century prosperity.

Yet this booming region had been known to the outside world for little more than a hundred years. In December of 1805, thirteen years after Captain Robert Gray's discovery of the Great River of the West, the expedition of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark descended to the mouth of the Columbia to spend the winter. When the explorers departed Fort Clatsop for their homeward journey the following March, they carried with them news of a beautiful, rich, and virgin land.

Soon fur trappers were moving up the Columbia in search of pelts. Gradually and then in a great swell in the second half of the nineteenth century came the homesteaders, traveling overland on the Oregon Trail or arriving via the Isthmus of Panama or Cape Horn. Most of these pioneers settled in the northwestern part of the state, for the Columbia River, the highway of the early Northwest, dictated the location and growth of settlements: thus the history of such cities as Portland and Astoria began with their waterfronts.

On June 1, 1905, one hundred years after Lewis and Clark had tramped the region, the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition opened in Portland to a flurry of fireworks and the mutual congratulations of local landowners, entrepreneurs, politicians, and the general visiting public. A commemorative brochure published at the time urged people everywhere "to help observe this Centennial Anniversary—to note the progress and to be inspired by evidence of past achievements."

It was a fitting commemoration, for just as Lewis and Clark had opened up the region to the fur trapper and settler, so the exposition of 1905 publicized its attractions to potential residents and businesses: beautiful scenery, a mild if somewhat liquid climate, a friendly people, and most importantly, land that was arable, productive, well-watered, and as yet unspoiled by concrete and asphalt. Two and a half million visitors attended the immensely successful exposition, a goodly portion from afar (135,000 from east of the Mississippi)—and returned home to spread the word.

The exposition not only brought a tidy profit to its investors and provided a showcase for Portland, the Willamette Valley, and the lower Columbia region, but it also expanded the careers of several Portland photographers. These men came to be known as "carriage cameramen" because they packed their cameras and glass negatives, hitched their horses to their carriages, and traveled the valleys and foothills recording bucolic scenes to catch the eye and loosen the pocketbook of the potential buyer.

There was a land boom on in Oregon, and such photographers were in demand to publicize the potential riches. State and local commercial clubs, chambers of commerce, and railroads brought out well-illustrated brochures designed to bring new settlers anxious to farm or to enter such growing industries as lumber and fishing. The booklets contained lyrical descriptions of western life, but the publishers wisely left it to the photographers (whose pictures were well worth a thousand words)to reinforce in black and white fact the more ebullient prose.

Among the carriage cameramen of the period was George M. Weister, who had begun his photographic career in 1890 as a salesmen for the E. J. Partridge Photographic Supply Company on the Portland waterfront. A year later Weister had become a photographer for Partridge, and within five years he had opened his own business where, like his fellow craftsmen, he took photographs and sold the usual photographic supplies as well as "moving picture machines" and "magic lantern slides." Weister was part of a small but influential group of commercial photographers who were characterized by Oregon poet and historian Howard M. Corning as men who were "artistically inclined and made it a part of their trade to take and sell photographs of superior scenic merit."

It was a productive combination of the artistic and business senses. The photographs of George Weister and his wife, Alice, span a period when the region they traveled was flourishing and its population increasing tenfold. The mountains, rivers, and ocean remained much the same, but the people and their activities were changing rapidly. And the camera of George Weister recorded both the constant and the changing world.

*Except where otherwise credited, photographs for this article have been provided through the courtesy of the owner of the original glass plates, Elaine Gobel of Portland, Oregon, and Douglas R. Oman and Jerry Kassinger of Northwest Photographic Services, Portland.*



SOUTHWEST FOURTH STREET, DOWNTOWN PORTLAND, 1912

EVERYTHING GOES
REMOVAL SALE
WE MOVE SOON
BRASFIELD & PORGES
SUITS
$15
OVERCOATS

# Tall Ships and Salmon . . .

WILLAMETTE RIVER AT THE PORTLAND DOCKS

The port of Portland was the focal point of that great commercial life-line, the Columbia River. Stern wheelers, with such still-remembered names as the *Bailey Gatzert*, the *Harvest Queen*, and the *Daisy Ainsworth*, steamed upriver to bring back an abundant harvest of wheat and produce from the mid and upper Columbia regions. In the harbor the tall ships waited to load cargo for transport to foreign ports and down the coast to San Francisco, the center of western population.

Beneath the sailing surface of the waters of the Northwest were other resources. In bays along the Oregon and southern Washington coast, oyster beds flourished; while on the Columbia, salmon made their yearly run upstream to the ancient fishing grounds at Celilo Falls. On the smaller tributaries the smelt came in such quantities that a man could get a day's supply by simply dipping his hat in the river.

STERNWHEELER "BAILEY GATZERT" AT THE CASCADE LOCKS, COLUMBIA RIVER

NETTING SMELT

OPENING OYSTERS

SALMON CANNERY, ASTORIA

# Forests and Farms . . .

In George Weister's day it was expected that the cry of "Timber!" would echo through the woods forever. Everything in sight could be logged—there were always more acres of tall trees on the next hill: Douglas fir, hemlock, spruce, and cedar west of the Cascades, long stretching stands of ponderosa pine to the east. The cutting of trees and the manufacture of lumber was the early dominating industry of Oregon.

A DOUGLAS FIR FOREST, BEFORE (ABOVE) AND AFTER (BELOW)

WILLAMETTE VALLEY ORCHARDS

OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The farms and orchards which made up much of the fertile Willamette Valley held strong appeal for Oregon settlers, offering the satisfactions of hard work and independence, and the rewards of a good harvest. With the establishment of great wheat ranches east of the Cascades, agriculture joined lumbering as a leading industry of the state.

HAULING ALFALFA TO MARKET

OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# The New Art of Motoring . . .

The automobile made an enthusiastic advent in Portland, but for many years its travel radius was somewhat limited, and a journey of fifty miles was a worthy news story. Steadily improving roads, however, soon began to be regarded as not only commercial arteries but as man-made resources for viewing nature's gifts. The Columbia River Highway, built between 1913 and 1915, was an engineering marvel and a scenic delight. Allowing the traveler to traverse the Columbia Gorge in comfort on a year-round basis, it also altered the pattern of the city dweller's leisure hours: the Sunday afternoon drive in the family touring car took the place of the Sunday · afternoon "at home!"

# Pageants and Parades . . .

CHILDREN'S PARADE, PORTLAND

The 1905 Lewis and Clark Exposition proved that westerners knew how to play. The frontier life was gradually giving way to the "good life" as Oregonians, always confident of their ability to work hard, found time to enjoy themselves and their surroundings.

The dedication of the Columbia River Highway on June 7, 1916, treated excursionists to elaborate ceremonies, including a historical pageant in the natural amphitheater at Multnomah Falls. In a highlight of the ceremonies, legendary Chief Multnomah, portrayed by *Oregon Journal* editor Marshall Dana (opposite), first protested and then accepted the advance of civilization, and the past was symbolically linked to the present.

FISH BOAT RACE, ASTORIA REGATTA



MULTNOMAH FALLS

# and Men to Match the Mountains . . .

George Weister and his fellow carriage cameramen found that Oregon's natural beauty made a stunning backdrop for photographs of its people at play. If a prospective settler was not immediately lured by views of well-clad bathing beauties frolicking in the surf, his enthusiasm might be caught by robust hikers perched among the pinnacles or by fishermen and picnickers gathered on a quiet riverbank.

Oregon in the early 1900s was in the market for new settlers, but the state was still particular. A verse by Sam Walter Foss, American poet of the period, aptly expresses that qualified ardor:

*Bring me men to match my mountains*
*Bring me men to match my plains*
*Men with empires in their purpose*
*And new eras in their brains.*

OCEAN BATHING, SEASIDE

Elizabeth W. Buehler *is the field historian at the Oregon Historical Society, where she edits the newsletter and serves as a liaison with local historical groups.*

# Wedding Gowns & Redwoods

One of the newest additions to the National Park System is a working ranch, the **Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site,** located near **Deer Lodge, Montana.** Formally opened in July after nearly three years of restoration work, the ranch dates from the 1850s when the Montana range-cattle industry was in its infancy. By the late nineteenth century, the ranch had become the center of a domain that included thousands of cattle and horses and extended over millions of acres of open range. Today the site, which will be open to visitors year-round, includes the large ranchhouse filled with many of its original Victorian furnishings, and thirty-five outbuildings. The ranch has been restocked with horses and Shorthorn cattle, and hay is again growing in the fields, providing visitors with a vivid glimpse of nineteenth-century life on the cattle frontier.

The **Buffalo Bill Historical Center** in **Cody, Wyoming,** has just received the studio collection of western artist **W. H. D. Koerner** (1878–1938), renowned for his many *Saturday Evening Post* illustrations. By 1978, the centennial of Koerner's birth, the Center plans to install a replica of his studio, complete with his own western props and accouterments, in the Whitney Gallery of Western Art, one of the Center's four museums.

"And the Bride Wore . . . ," a group of **wedding gowns dating from 1860 to 1919,** is on view in a new exhibit area at the **Arizona Historical Society** in **Tucson.** The bridal display is the first in a series of period-costume exhibits planned for the new area.

The **Oral History Association** will hold its **Twelfth Annual National Workshop and Colloquium** at the Hotel del Coronado, **Coronado, California,** from October 20–23. Additional information can be obtained from Ronald E. Marcello, Oral History Association, Box 13734, N. T. Station, North Texas State University, Denton, Texas 76203.

BRANDING CALVES ON THE GRANT-KOHRS RANCH, CIRCA 1910. NOW A PART OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM (LEFT)

A new exhibit, **"Pioneers and Adventurers: Jews Across the Plains and the Rockies,"** will be on view through most of 1977 at the **Museum of American Jewish History** on Independence Mall in **Philadelphia.** Original artifacts, manuscripts, and memorabilia from collections in sixteen western states have been assembled to tell the story of Jewish participation in the settlement of the West. Among the individuals featured in the exhibit are painter Solomon Nunes Carvalho, who accompanied John C. Frémont across the Rockies; Fred Z. Salomon, an early Colorado settler and friend of Buffalo Bill; and Levi Strauss, the originator of blue jeans.

A traditional **Indian-style salmon bake** will be held on September 10 at **Fogarty Creek State Park, Depoe Bay, Oregon.** Fresh ocean-caught salmon cooked over an open fire will be served with all the trimmings at a spot by the sea. More information can be obtained from the Depoe Bay Chamber of Commerce.

As part of its traditional participation in the annual Western History Association Conference (October 12–15 in Portland, Oregon), the **Council on Abandoned Military Posts** will hold a dinner on October 12 at the Portland Motor Inn during which Professor Tom Buckley of the University of Minnesota will give an illustrated talk on the restoration of **Fort Snelling** in Minnesota. Reservations at $7.50 can be made through CAMP, P.O. Box 171, Arlington, Virginia 22210.

A group of sixty-nine black and white photographs by third-generation Californian **Ansel Adams** can be seen through September at the **California Historical Society's Southern California headquarters** in **San Marino** and at the **Center for Photographic Arts** in **La Jolla.** Entitled "The Redwood Empire," the exhibit features the forests, shores, and weathered buildings of northern California, "from San Francisco beyond the Oregon line, and from the Pacific to the eastern slope of the Coast Range, including the areas of Napa and Sonoma," as Adams defines the locale of his photographs.

**"San Antonio Is . . . ," a multi-image slide program** presented at the city's **Witte Memorial Museum,** uses more than 1,900 slides to provide a unique look at the history of the Texas city. The slide program is complemented by taped "on the street" interviews with hundreds of area residents. On view in the adjacent gallery is a nineteenth-century horse-drawn fire engine, early military artifacts, a collection of elaborately embroidered robes worn during the annual Fiesta Week, and a display of cowboy gear. The entire program will continue throughout the year.

In the 1880s many Italian miners settled in coal-rich Pittsburg County, Oklahoma. On September 3–4 in **McAlester, Oklahoma,** their descendants will celebrate this heritage with an **Italian Festival** of folk music, dances, costumes, cooking, and arts and crafts.

The fourth annual **Montana History Conference,** sponsored by the Montana Heritage Foundation in cooperation with the Montana Committee for the Humanities, the Montana Historical Society, and the Council to Preserve Montana History, will be held November 3–5, with headquarters at the Colonial Inn in **Helena.** Featured topics include the famous "Lady from Montana" Jeannette Rankin, the history of the state legislature, Montana's livestock industry, and plans for historic preservation.

# Historic Hawaii

REVIEWED BY H. BRETT MELENDY

THESE FOUR BOOKS add many details to our knowledge of Hawaii's history. From each, the reader will gain considerable information about the islands' past.

*From Land and Sea* is an "authorized biography" of one of Hawaii's Big Five sugar companies—Castle & Cooke. This company history presents the biographies of the first partners, Samuel Castle and Amos S. Cooke, and of subsequent presidents of the corporation.

The development of this mercantile firm as a sugar producer first in the kingdom and then in the republic of Hawaii is well done. The book is essentially a story of management—its concerns, its in-house fights—and the growth of a company into a twentieth century conglomerate after World War II.

Except for a brief passage about company problems with the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union on the docks and plantations, little attention is given to the workers of Castle & Cooke. Reading about the leaders of this company, one can observe, perhaps too superficially, some of the problems that have faced Hawaii's Big Five.

**From Land and Sea: The Story of Castle & Cooke of Hawaii** by Frank J. Taylor, Earl M. Welty, and David W. Eyre *(Chronicle Books, San Francisco, 1976; 288 pp., illus., biblio., appen., glossary, index, $9.95).*

**Nahi'ena'ena: Sacred Daughter of Hawai'i** by Marjorie Sinclair *(University Press of Hawaii, Honolulu, 1976: 199 pp., illus., biblio., notes, index, $8.95).*

**News From Molokai: Letters Between Peter Kaeo & Queen Emma, 1873–1876,** edited by Alfons L. Korn *(University Press of Hawaii, Honolulu, 1976; 291 pp., intro., illus., appen., index, $14.95).*

**For Whom Are the Stars?: Revolution and Counterrevolution in Hawaii, 1893–1895** by Albertine Loomis *(University Press of Hawaii, Honolulu, 1976; 251 pp., illus., biblio., $9.95).*

The books *Nahi'ena'ena* and *News From Molokai* provide fascinating insights into the difficulties and concerns of Hawaii's royalty during the nineteenth-century conflict between the Hawaiian people and the expanding American society.

The poignant biography of Princess Nahi'ena'ena has been well written by Marjorie Sinclair. The princess was the only daughter of King Kamehameha I, founder of the Hawaiian kingdom, and his wife, Keopuloani, a chieftess of sacred rank who was converted to Christianity in the last year of her life. Earlier, the queen had sent her children to missionary schools. Young Princess Nahi'ena'ena became closely attached to the missionaries at Lahaina, Maui, and accepted their religious teachings. Hawaiians expected her to marry her brother, who later became Kamehameha III, and preserve the royal and sacred lines. But the missionaries saw such an alliance to be incestuous. After much turmoil and agony, she did marry her brother, which led to her excommunication from the church. As Sinclair suggests, this account of a young girl destroyed by the grinding faces of two different cultures is reflective of the forces confronting all Hawaiians.

*News from Molokai* is a collection of letters written by Peter Young Kaeo, a royal cousin of Queen Emma, from 1873 to 1876. During this period, Kaeo was confined at the leper colony at Kalaupapa, Molokai.

His letters to Queen Emma allow us to experience his personal feelings about his disease and to see through his eyes the people and the physical setting of Kalaupapa. Additionally, the reader can feel the political intrigue that was constantly boiling in the kingdom during these years. Korn's book, as usual, is well researched. Each letter is well footnoted, translating Hawaiian terms and identifying the people mentioned.

*For Whom Are the Stars?* continues to demonstrate Albertine Loomis's excellent talent as a historian of Hawaii. The book reads like a mystery novel as the author unfolds the history of the three years between the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarch in 1893, the establishment of the republic, and the royalists' 1895 counterrevolutionary efforts.

Loomis examines both sides of the issue, the involvement of the United States in the 1893 revolution, and the Cleveland administration's subsequent investigation. Strong-willed Queen Lili'uokalani's inability to compromise with Republican leaders and her tacit support of the royalists and their abortive efforts led to her trial and subsequent imprisonment. While Hawaiian students of history are familiar with these events, Loomis's ability to narrate a suspenseful story and to breathe life into the people is outstanding. This book is recommended to specialists and general readers.

**H. Brett Melendy** *is a professor of American history at the University of Hawaii. He has coauthored* The Governors of California *and written* The Oriental Americans *and* Asians in America.

**Among the Blackfoot and Sarcee** by Canon H. W. Gibbon Stocken with an introduction by Georgeen Barrass *(Glenbow-Alberta Institute, Calgary, Alberta, 1976; 75 pp., illus., intro., notes, $3.00 paper).*

Anglican missionary H. W. Gibbon Stocken lived and worked among the Blackfoot and Sarcee Indians of Alberta from 1885 to 1923. Deeply sympathetic to the Indians' plight since white settlement had cut off their traditional means of livelihood based on the buffalo, Stocken learned their languages and became a genuine friend. This interesting memoir includes an informative introduction by Georgeen Barrass and is illustrated with photographs taken by Stocken.

**Cyrus E. Dallin: Let Justice Be Done** by Rell G. Francis *(Springville Museum of Art, Springville, Utah, 1976; 262 pp., illus., intro., notes, biblio., index, $14.61).*

This large-format volume commemorates the work of sculptor Cyrus E. Dallin, known best for his life-size bronzes portraying Native Americans, pioneers, and Paul Revere. The genius of this great American artist has long been recognized; however, this is the first book-length study of Dallin.

**Maritime Memories of Puget Sound** by Joe Williamson and Jim Gibbs *(Superior Publishing Company, Seattle, 1976; 184 pp., illus., intro., $12.95).*

This generous selection of early-day photographs, mainly from the collection of coauthor Joe Williamson, provides glimpses of ship and shore activity around Puget Sound during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Detailed and informative captions and a brief text accompany the pictures.

**The Coffee Chased Us Up** by Elof Norman *(The Mountaineers, Seattle, 1977; 128 pp., illus., $3.95 paper).*

Elof Norman enrolled in a creative writing course at age seventy-five; this lively account of his childhood in the now-deserted mining town of Monte Cristo, Washington, is the result of his experiment. Norman's unpretentious storytelling paints a realistic picture of the joys and hardships of life in turn-of-the-century Monte Cristo.

ILLUSTRATION FROM "INDIAN ARTISTS AT WORK

**Indian Artists at Work** by Ulli Steltzer *(University of Washington, Seattle, 1977; 163 pp., illus., intro., $14.95).*

Photographer Ulli Steltzer, known for her studies of Blacks, migrant workers, and Southwest Indians, spent a year visiting the homes and workshops of traditional Indian artists in British Columbia. She photographed them at work and recorded what they said about their art; the result is this simple and effective book.

**The Willamette Locomotive** by Steve Hauff and Jim Gertz *(Binford & Mort, Portland, Oregon, 1977; 182 pp., illus., glossary, appen., biblio., index, $15.00).*

The Willamette geared locomotive was developed in the 1920s to haul logs out of the forests of the Pacific Northwest. This lovingly detailed history of the only mass-produced geared locomotive ever built on the West Coast includes scale drawings and numerous period photographs as well as historical and statistical data on the more than thirty Willamette models.

**The Canadian Northern Railway: Pioneer Road of the Northern Prairies, 1895–1918** by T. D. Regehr *(Macmillan of Canada/Maclean-Hunter Press, Toronto, 1976; 543 pp., illus., intro., maps, tables, appen., notes, biblio., index, $27.50).*

This comprehensive study chronicles the rise and fall of the controversial railroad that opened vast stretches of western Canada to settlers between 1895 and 1915, but eventually failed amid charges of graft and corruption. The author, an associate professor at the University of Saskatchewan, has made extensive use of company records only recently placed in the Public Archives of Canada.

**The Battle of the Little Bighorn** by the staff of the Department of Anthropology, National Museum of Natural History *(Smithsonian Institution, Photographic Services, Washington, D.C. 20560, 1976; 80 slides, 34 pp. booklet, illus., map, biblio., $25.00).*

This kit of eighty slides provides a well-balanced explanation of the famous Battle of the Little Bighorn. Included are slides of Indian and army participants, their weapons, the battlefield, and later artwork about the battle. An accompanying booklet provides background information, captions for the slides, a brief bibliography, and a map of the battlefield.

**The Coyote: Defiant Songdog of the West** by Francois Leydet *(Chronicle Books, San Francisco, 1977; 222 pp., illus., appen., biblio., $7.95).*

The viewpoints of both rancher and environmentalist are presented in this intelligent, often shocking book on the emotional coyote controversy. The amazing adaptability of this small predator leads the author to question humankind's right to interfere with nature. Unusual illustrations depict the coyote's desert life.

**Recollections of the Flathead Mission** by Fr. Gregory Mengarini, S.J., translated and edited with a biographical introduction by Gloria Ricci Lothrop *(The Arthur H. Clark Company, Glendale, California, 1977; 256 pp., illus., map, intro., appen., notes, biblio., index, $16.95).*

Father Gregory Mengarini's account of his experiences among the Flathead Indians at the Jesuit mission in the Bitterroot Valley during the 1840s was not discovered by scholars until 1960. Gloria Lothrop, who translated the account from Italian, has added a valuable and extensive introduction.

**Man in Glacier** by C. W. Buchholtz *(Glacier Natural History Association, West Glacier, Montana, 1976; 88 pp., illus., map, biblio., $2.95).*

Native Americans, explorers, conservationists, miners, settlers, tourists, and park employees have all left their mark on Glacier National Park; and this book's purpose is to recount that human aspect of the park's history. Many interesting old photographs complement the text.

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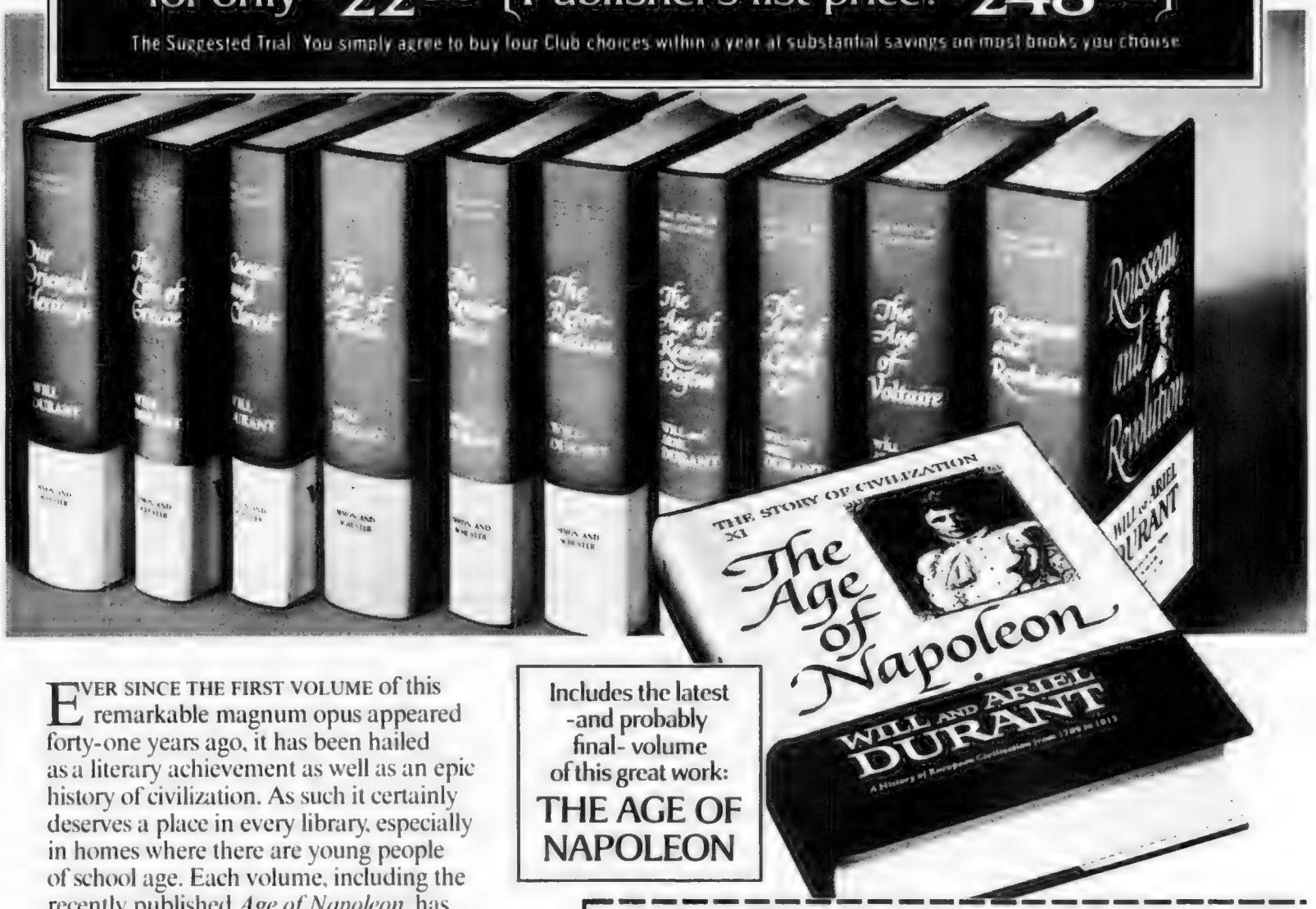


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# California Indian Folklore

REVIEWED BY ROBERT F. HEIZER

NATIVE AMERICAN oral literature, usually called myth or folklore, may be interesting to read because it is exotic. Occasionally it rises to the level of good literature. Alfred L. Kroeber managed to find two Native Californian tribes who were outstanding in this regard, and whose tales contain complex plots and whose characters (once you get to know them) are credible, though quite different from those we are accustomed to. The first tribe is the Mohave of the Colorado River, but they do not concern us here. The second is the Yurok of the lower Klamath River and the Humboldt County coast, and their tales are in *Yurok Myths*, a posthumous work.

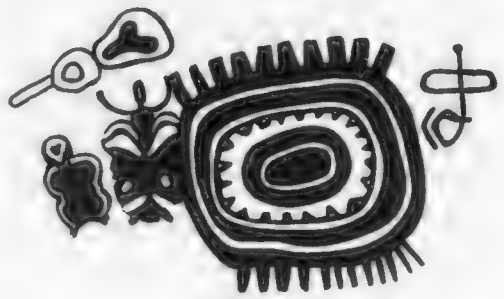
**December's Child: A Book of Chumash Oral Narratives** edited, with an analysis, by Thomas C. Blackburn *(University of California Press, Berkeley, 1975; 381 pp., illus., maps, biblio., appen., glossary, $12.95).*

**Yurok Myths** by A. L. Kroeber, foreword by Theodora Kroeber *(University of California Press, Berkeley, 1976; 528 pp., intro., illus., maps, biblio., appen., index, $18.50).*

Also posthumous, and reviewed here, is *December's Child*, a body of myth of the Chumash Indians of the Santa Barbara region collected by an able but eccentric scholar, John Peabody Harrington. Harrington was a data pack rat who collected much more than he ever was willing to take the time to share with the taxpayers who for so long supported him and his work in the Smithsonian's Bureau of American Ethnology. His notes are now being exploited by a new generation of young scholars, and only perceptive reading of the book will reveal that these myths are the result of his work. There is no question but that Harrington's name should have been featured more prominently.

Of the two bodies of tales, Kroeber's *Yurok Myths* is not only more interesting, but also a more informative and scholarly work of recording.

The Yurok are psychologically interesting because their world view and actions are so closely associated with mythology. The logical model of the universe



is provided in myths because the myth people and their actions are the archetypes of present-day humans and what they do. The myth people, called *wogé*, were of human form and the size of a small child, becoming adult at six months. They prepared the world for true men, ordained all belief, actions, and rituals; and after saying "humans will do the same," disappeared to become natural objects, birds, and animals. Yurok life, therefore, is a repetition of that of the archetypal *wogé*, and their myths are thus seen as documentary histories of Yurok institutions. There is extreme localization of myth events occurring within Yurok territory at special spots, each named and familiar to all persons in the tribe.

Thirty Yurok informants provided the 158 tales, which are presented in groups by the individual teller. A biographical personality sketch of each informant is provided. These are extraordinarily perceptive and often touching sketches of Yurok individuals still living in the Indian past in their minds, but also in the reality of a world taken over by the Americans. Many of the Yurok myths involve the activities of Wohpekumeu ("widower from across the ocean") who is both a culture hero and trickster, stealing salmon and acorns so that man could possess them, but full of tricks and philandering. Another myth character, Pulekukwerek, is also prominent in the tales. He was responsible for securing for man's benefit the sky, night, water, redwood canoes, as well as destroying monsters. The tales are rich in symbolism (often explained by Kroeber in ethnographic glosses), and as one reads them, though he may not react like a Yurok, enough of the remarkable civilization of the Klamath River country will be communicated to induce a respect for the creative imagination of that varied culture.

Coming now to the Chumash tribe, we encounter a people of cultural distinction equal to, but wholly different from the Yurok. *December's Child* consists of 111 Chumash tales recorded at intervals between 1912 and 1928 by J. P. Harrington. They are diverse in theme and vary from one paragraph to sixteen pages in length. No sketches of the informants are given, and for that reason they stand simply as stark recordings—anonymous, detached, and less personal than the Yurok tales. It is good to have even this body of what must have been originally a much richer oral literature, and we must thank Harrington for salvaging it.

The editor's contribution of eighty-eight pages, while interesting so far as it goes, is not (as one might expect in 1976 from a would-be folklorist) a professional contribution to folklore analysis. While some cognate tales are identified within the Native California culture sphere, the Aarne-Thompson tale type index of Indo-European tales is not even referred to. Thus, Tale 107 ("The Ungrateful Serpent Returned to Captivity") is a popular Indo-European-African tale not previously reported in Native American tradition. It may have been told by a Chumash, but it is neither peculiar to the Chumash nor is it an American Indian tale.

The editor of Harrington's myths makes a good effort to articulate postulates of world view. These are interesting, but the ethnohistorian can surely be allowed a question: How much of aboriginal Chumash world view really survived up to 1912, somewhat over one hundred years after missionization, Hispanization, Mexicanization and Americanization of the estimated fifteen to twenty thousand Chumash people living in 1769? A few of the stories were recorded in Chumash, but more in Spanish and English. The reviewer cannot escape the thought that this collection of Harrington recordings is much more than a simple recital of Chumash oral narratives, and that embedded in it (perhaps without hope of extraction) is part of the acculturation record of the Chumash nation.

**Robert F. Heizer** *is professor of anthropology and director of the Archaeological Research Facility, University of California, Berkeley.*

# Centennial Campaign

REVIEWED BY JACK BURROWS

CUSTER is one old soldier who will never "fade away." The historical lacunae created by the annihilation of himself and his battalion, the hirsute and sartorical elegance, and the unpredictable personality have all merged to birth a controversial legend quite apart from the soldier himself—a legend that has endured and prospered for a century.

**Centennial Campaign: The Sioux War of 1876** by John S. Gray *(Old Army Press, Fort Collins, Colorado, 1976; 392 pp., maps, biblio., index, $20.00).*

Custer has been called reckless, arrogant, disobedient, a glory hunter. Dr. Karl Menninger pronounced him a "psychopath." Indians want to tear down his statue in New Rumley, Ohio, his birthplace, because "Native Americans consider Custer a murderer." Bumper stickers proclaim that Custer Had It Coming.

Partisans call him fearless, tireless, a *beau sabreur,* the Boy General. There are more artistic renditions of "The Last Fight" than of Washington crossing the Delaware.

The near-deification of Custer began in 1876 with Frederick Whittaker's *Life* and continued through Elizabeth Custer's autobiographical love paeans to Frazier Hunt's *Last of the Cavaliers* in 1928. The debunking commenced in 1934, the year after Elizabeth Custer's death, with Frederick Van de Water's *Glory Hunter* and has continued—with exceptions—to the present.

John Gray's *Centennial Campaign* will doubtless keep the Custer saga green and flourishing for another century.

A revisionist, Gray statistically rejects the generally held view that a pincers strategy under Generals Terry, Crook, and Gibbon centered on the Little Bighorn valley, there to trap the Sioux; that the function of Custer's 7th Cavalry was merely to scout; that Custer ruthlessly drove his men, arrived on the scene early and jaded, and in disobedience to Terry's orders attacked, after dividing his command, thus ruining the grand strategy.

Subjecting an astonishing array of statistics to a monumental exegesis—troop numbers, timetables, mileage, time zones—and exploiting distinctions between contemporary diaries and later self-apologias, Gray argues that there was no pincers strategy because no one knew where the Indians were. Instead, a "strike" and "block" strategy was followed: once the Indians had been located, Terry and Gibbon would move into a "blocking" position and Custer would "strike."

*Custer?* Yes, declares Gray. And by use of troop statistics he proves that Custer had the numerically superior command which, under a fighter like himself, could be nothing less than the striking force.

Neither did Custer march his men ruthlessly nor did he disobey orders. He followed Terry's timetable precisely, even at a leisurely pace, as occasion demanded. He arrived at his objective at the correct time, but the unexpected location of the Indian village meant that Terry and Gibbon would not yet be in position. Knowing his presence had been discovered, Custer had no choice but to attack—or become "invisible."

And the division of his command? That, too, was proper. Terry had ordered him to "feel to the left" so the Indians might not slip by him. Custer doubtless intended to unite his command behind Major Marcus Reno's charge, but Captain Frederick Benteen, who was assigned the "feeling," perversely "dawdled," hence the frantic notes to "Come Quick." Once Reno was committed and Benteen had not yet come up, it was too late to unite the command. Gray believes Custer ascended the bluffs to determine Indian strength and location, and finding no way to get down to Reno, was forced to continue on.

*Centennial Campaign* is a study of the Sioux War with the exculpation of Custer as its integral theme. Once Custer is disposed of, however, the book becomes a statistical polemic that is likely to repel the general reader. And statistical inundation, along with a tendency to "get right with the Indian," has, unfortunately, imposed a parochial, one-dimensional view on an otherwise remarkable book.

**Jack Burrows** *teaches American history at San Jose City College, California.*

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**Custer's Last Stand: The Anatomy of an American Myth** by Brian W. Dippie *(University of Montana, Missoula, 1976; 226 pp., illus., biblio., appen., notes, index, $7.95 paper).*

REVIEWED BY ROBERT M. UTLEY

AS CUSTER'S LAST STAND continues to enthrall a global audience, the means by which it has embedded itself in the public consciousness and attained enduring legendary proportions continue to fascinate students both of the battle and of the myth-making process. Dippie's purpose is "to show how the familiar concept of Custer's Last Stand is largely a creation of nonhistorical materials, of popular culture which, omnivorous, feeds upon fact and fancy, history and legend, and, turning cannibal, upon itself." In six chapters dealing with such instruments of legendry as poetry, art, fiction, and drama, he ably traces the unfolding of the Custer legend. It is doubtful if many significant examples of each form have escaped his discovery and analysis.

Especially intriguing is the chapter on reenactments, from Buffalo Bill's Wild West to the extravaganza mounted by the Crow Indians in recent summers near the Custer Battlefield. But the reenactments most decisive in shaping popular conceptions occurred in motion pictures. Dippie traces them from the first, in 1909, to Arthur Penn's *Little Big Man* in 1970. Towering over all is *They Died With Their Boots On*, "the cinematic equivalent of the Budweiser Beer print," Dippie concludes, which has "engraved in the American memory" the image of Errol Flynn as George Custer. That was my own youthful image, and it continues to be refurbished at least once a year on late-night television.

In the final chapter, Dippie shows how the popular view of Custer and the Little Bighorn (and the scholarly view, too, for that matter) has undergone successive mutations reflecting the needs and concerns of each generation. Through all, however, the "heroic stance" has continued to hold public attention. Custer's Last Stand, he observes, will survive any treatment but neglect, and that seems unlikely.

Provocative, informative, fascinating, and almost incidentally a bibliographical treasure, Dippie's book is sure to enjoy the favor of all who, like me, are incurably addicted to the history and legend of the Little Bighorn.

**Robert M. Utley** *is an incurable Custer buff.*

**Massacre at Mountain Meadows: An American Legend and a Monumental Crime** by William Wise *(Thomas Y. Crowell, New York, 1976; 317 pp., maps, biblio., appen., notes, index, $11.95).*

REVIEWED BY BEN PROCTER

IN SEPTEMBER 1857, an emigrant wagon train from Arkansas (the Fancher Party), after being besieged by 300 Pah-Utes in southern Utah, capitulated to a group of Mormon "protectors." In the terms of surrender the settlers agreed to give up their arms and ammunition, then march single file from the protective environs of their circled wagons—the women and children first, then the men flanked on each side by Mormon guards.

As these instructions were being carried out, the escort suddenly turned on the luckless emigrants and shot them point blank. Next, the Pah-Utes charged from cover to attack the women and children with knives and tomahawks. When the carnage was over, more than 120 people lay dead. Thus occurred the Mountain Meadows massacre which William Wise, characterized on the jacket as "the versatile author of *Killer Smog*," has designated "a truly monumental crime."

Although this work purports to reveal the true account concerning the Fancher Party, it is nothing more than a diatribe on the Mormons. In fact, Wise devotes almost two-thirds of his manuscript to a critical interpretation of Mormonism. Hence, Joseph Smith "patterned himself after his father," sharing "both his money-digging schemes and his idleness"; Brigham Young was "a supreme egotist," who was "capable of organizing a great variety of covert misdeeds and open felonies"; and the Mormons were "a group of disciplined and fanatical enemies of the . . . republic," who had broken "the laws of the nation and of mankind."

Consequently, *Massacre at Mountain Meadows* has little historical worth. Wise has been neither unbiased in his approach nor objective in his conclusions; he has ignored or failed to consult such historians as Nels Anderson, Thomas F. O'Dea, and Ray W. Irwin; and he has convicted Brigham Young and the Mormon hierarchy with supposition and circumstantial evidence. Since such words or phrases as "no doubt," "perhaps," "probably," and "in all likelihood" crop up repeatedly, the reader should judge this work for what it is—a well-written historical novel.

**Ben Proctor** *is a professor of history at Texas Christian University.*

**The Alaska Pipeline: The Politics of Oil and Native Land Claims** by Mary Clay Berry *(Indiana University, Bloomington, 1975; 302 pp., illus., biblio., notes, index, $10.95).*

REVIEWED BY TED C. HINCKLEY

JOURNALIST Mary Clay Berry served as Washington correspondent for two Alaskan newspapers from 1967 to 1971. Her timely and insightful analysis of Alaska's controversial pipeline, and in particular her examination of the book's subtitle, *The Politics of Oil and Native Land Claims*, is indispensable reading for those seeking an understanding of these topics.

Sadly, those brave enough to write current history are too often careless with that which is not current. Berry's chapter detailing postpurchase Alaska evidences a newsperson's haste to get the story. Fish, not gold, was the true mainstay of Alaska's prestatehood economy, and both Juneau and Nome preceded Fairbanks as centers of gold production. Far North natives were being assimilated into a white world long before the Yanks arrived, and Alaska did not wait until 1912 before obtaining an official delegate to Washington.

The author makes it embarrassingly clear that the poststatehood development of Alaska's resources elbowed aside serious consideration of native economic claims. Even the justly famed liberal Ernest Gruening exhibited an astonishingly cavalier attitude when it came to guarding the Great Land's beauty and the rights of its aboriginal citizens.

Fortunately for the natives, the discovery of oil on the Arctic Slope came before their own claims had been resolved. With the lucrative lever of Prudhoe Bay profits they achieved a breath-taking settlement: forty million acres and a dollar sum that will eventually exceed one billion.

Mary Berry's detailed recounting of the wheeler-dealer oil plungers, native lobbyists, and assorted politicos within and outside Alaska ends in 1974 as construction began on the embattled pipeline. Symbolically, that same year witnessed the end of homesteading in Alaska. Three years later it was terminated everywhere across the United States. The great giveaway was over.

**Ted C. Hinckley** *is a professor of history at San Jose State University in California and the author of* The Americanization of Alaska, 1867–1897.

**The Corporation and the Indian: Tribal Sovereignty and Industrial Civilization in Indian Territory, 1865–1907** by H. Craig Miner *(University of Missouri, Columbia, 1976; 256 pp., biblio., index, $11.00).*

REVIEWED BY RICHARD N. ELLIS

CHEROKEE CHIEF JOHN ROSS warned in 1857 that the self-government of the tribes in Indian Territory was threatened by the spirit of industrial America's corporations and that they could bring "strife, injury and political destruction." The prediction came true between 1865 and 1907, for it was during this period that corporate interests moved to exploit the varied natural resources of Indian Territory.

Railroads were interested in the 1866 treaties with the Five Civilized Tribes, for they provided rights-of-way. And the involvement of railroads was followed by other corporations interested in such resources of the area as timber, coal, livestock, and oil.

Unfortunately Ross's warning went unheeded, and intertribal and intratribal unity was lacking. At different times tribal policy favored and then opposed corporate involvement, and a number of Indians were advocates of corporate exploitation.

Companies exploited tribal divisions, circumvented tribal law, and were basically unrestrained by an indecisive federal government; and the exploitation of Indian resources was accompanied by a reduction of tribal sovereignty.

Dr. Miner concludes that the history of Indian Territory in this period was dominated by the rise of the corporation, which was the most important force in destroying tribal sovereignty. Federal officials often participated in the plundering of tribal resources.

In *The Corporation and the Indian* Miner has made extensive use of government records in the National Archives and its branches, and tribal records in the Oklahoma Historical Society. He has focused needed attention on corporate relations with Indian tribes.

Those interested in this topic should also consult appropriate portions of recent studies by William Hagan on the Comanches and Donald Berthrong on the Southern Cheyennes.

**Richard N. Ellis** *teaches at the University of New Mexico. His books include* General Pope and U.S. Indian Policy, The Western American Indian, *and* New Mexico, Past and Present.


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**Life in a Narrow Place: The Havasupai of the Grand Canyon** by Stephen Hirst with photographs by Terry and Lyntha Scott Eiler *(David McKay Company, New York, 1976; 316 pp., illus., biblio., notes, index, $11.95).*

REVIEWED BY DONALD G. PIKE

LIFE IN A NARROW PLACE is essentially a history of the quest by the Havasupai to reclaim their ancestral tribal lands on the plateau above their canyon home. In laying the groundwork for this story, Stephen Hirst draws on history, anthropology, and his own experiences with these people to tell a respectably complete and readable account of life as the Havasupai know it.

Before losing the plateau, the Havasupai had evolved a seasonally bifurcated existence: sedentary farmers on the canyon floor during the summer months and seminomadic hunters and gatherers on the plateau during the late fall and winter. This balanced, successful cycle of life ended when the tribe lost its lands on the plateau and was confined to the canyon. Over time, the recovery of the lost lands along the south rim of the Grand Canyon became increasingly important as population pressure in the canyon began to crush the Havasupai way of life, driving the young out and permanently destroying once-renewable resources that had sustained the tribe.

Hirst knows the Havasupai intimately and has obviously developed an intense respect and affection for these gentle people. With only a few forays into the Noble Savage Syndrome (White-Eyes murders Bambi, while the Indian lives in harmony with his-brother-the-deer—although either way the critter ends up dead), Hirst manages to provide a window on the life and ethos of the Havasupai.

In addition to the Indians, Hirst also shows us a microcosm of our own government, as he traces the legal tangle that finally returned the south rim lands to the Havasupai. To this reviewer he portrays a bureaucracy that is more muddled than malevolent and more indifferent than greedy; in all, a strikingly lifelike portrait. He even includes a few well-aimed brickbats at a misguided Sierra Club.

The graphics, unfortunately, are predominantly portraits of Havasupai individuals, revealing little of the way of life in this narrow place.

**Donald G. Pike**'*s book* Anasazi *was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in 1974.*

**A Vision Shared: A Classic Portrait of America and Its People, 1935–1943,** text by Hank O'Neal, photographs by the Farm Security Administration photographers *(St. Martin's Press, New York, 1976; 312 pp., illus., index, $39.95).*

REVIEWED BY STEVE CROUCH

THE DEPRESSION of the thirties is gone. For those who lived through it there are only bad memories; those who came later find it difficult to believe what a terrible time it was.

A handful of government photographers went through stricken America and made a remarkable record of the land and its people. The file of photographs they compiled has become the most important document of that time. One single photograph, Dorothea Lange's *Migrant Mother,* probably ranks among the four or five best-known photographs since the medium was invented.

The eleven photographers who produced the majority of the 250,000 negatives for the Farm Security Administration were urged by O'Neal to select the works each felt to be his best. The result is a fascinating series of photographs of America at that time.

This is not the first book of FSA photographs—far from it. But the others have mostly been collections of the well-known ones. In contrast, this volume contains only one or two of the landmark photographs. Lange's *Migrant Mother* is not here, but the other six photographs made of the same desperate woman are. Walker Evans's beautiful glimpses of the small-town south, Ben Shahn's gripping documentaries of the rural poor, the Dust-Bowl pictures of Arnold Rothstein—these were all forerunners of the style of photographic reportage that reached a climax in *Life* magazine and has been copied by documentary photographers ever since.

This collection, a large one, includes almost three hundred photographs. It has the advantage over most such books: here the photographs are treated respectfully. Each is given plenty of space; there is no crowding in the book. And above all, each is superbly reproduced—an increasing rarity in these days.

A valuable book—both as history and as art.

**Steve Crouch,** *author of* Steinbeck Country *and* Desert Country, *has been a professional photographer for more than thirty years. He has had many one-man shows, and his work has been acquired by several museums.*

**Ten Thousand Goddam Cattle: A History of the American Cowboy in Song, Story and Verse** by Katie Lee *(Northland Press, Flagstaff, 1976; 268 pp., intro., illus., biblio., notes, glossary, compendium of songs, $12.50).*

REVIEWED BY JOHN I. WHITE

FOLKSINGER-GUITARIST Katie Lee's volume should quickly find a place beside other good collections of songs by and about that rugged individualist the American cowboy. Interestingly, this woman compiler of the cowpuncher's poetic and musical achievements seems to have been closer to her subject, to have breathed more corral dust and smelled more saddle leather, than most male promulgators of western balladry. The book's language and content, accordingly, are at times a bit salty.

The odd title is borrowed from a song, a parody on novelist Owen Wister's composition "Ten Thousand Cattle Straying."

Katie Lee grew up in Tucson, and after years of entertaining in night spots, at colleges and women's clubs, on radio and TV, she settled down in the hilly old copper town of Jerome, Arizona. As a result, her offering has a distinctly southwestern flavor.

The book is about southwestern people as well as their songs. Most of the men Katie Lee writes about are from her home state. Special attention is accorded Gail Gardner of Prescott, noted for his humorous ditty about tying knots in the devil's tail. Tunes for this and two of Gardner's poetic reflections on changing times are among the fifty-three items in the song compendium. While the narrative is laced with verse, both by unknowns and old pros such as Badger Clark, S. Omar Barker, and Henry Herbert Knibbs, the tunes as well as extensive notes on the songs are all gathered in the back of the book.

Katie Lee avoids most well-known cowboy ballads but includes many rarely found in print elsewhere. She gives a glossary plus excellent bibliographies of western song anthologies, poetry collections, and volumes on cowboy life and lore.

Running all through the book is the fascinating story of the author's search for the lost northern New Mexico town of Old Dolores, commemorated in song by one of her heroes, James Grafton Rogers of Denver, who also is credited with the song "The Santa Fe Trail."

**John I. White** *is the author of* Git Along Little Dogies: Songs and Songmakers of the American West.

**American Environmental History: The Exploitation and Conservation of Natural Resources** by Joseph M. Petulla *(Boyd & Fraser, San Francisco, 1977; 399 pp., intro., illus., maps, charts, biblio., index, $9.95 paper).*

REVIEWED BY PETER N. CARROLL

AMERICAN ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY provides a unique approach to our national past. While most books emphasize the political saga of national leaders, this study introduces readers to the changing relationship between the American people and their natural environment from colonial days to the present. The story is a sad one. Since the invasion of the continent by Europeans, Americans have proven diabolically ingenious at transforming natural resources into a supermarket of prepackaged commodities. This transformation, Petulla amply demonstrates, had the approval of all segments of society, despite occasional disagreements and variations of technique.

Petulla, a historian at the University of California, Berkeley, tends to avoid questions of motivation, assuming that the profit motive is sufficient explanation for the rape of the environment. For this reason, he ignores comparisons with other cultural groups, such as Native Americans, who had a less materialistic view of the natural world.

The book's strength lies in its descriptions of how things were done. From rice cultivation to whaling, from iron smelting to California gold mining, Petulla explains the everyday techniques that changed the contours of the land. The book also presents a clear discussion of the history of conservation and the defense of natural resources by recent environmentalists.

By concentrating on the natural environment, however, Petulla neglects and often misinterprets the human aspects of his narrative. For example, he tends to overlook the cultural background of the people who migrated across the continent. Such factors are nevertheless important in assessing the relationship of people to their environment.

Despite such problems, *American Environmental History* provides a substantial introduction to the subject. As Petulla declares, "The idea that nature and its resources exist solely to be used for the material benefit of humans" is as American as cherry pie.

**Peter N. Carroll** *is the author of* Puritanism and the Wilderness.


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**The Worlds of Ernest Thompson Seton** edited by John G. Samson *(Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1976; 206 pp., intro., illus., biblio., index, $25.00).*

REVIEWED BY THOMAS H. HUNT

THIS HANDSOMELY CRAFTED, large-format, profusely illustrated book is a welcome addition to the nature library and a very elegant tribute to one of America's great artist-naturalists, Ernest Thompson Seton. Though he was born in England, Seton made the Canadian backwoods and the western plains his special domains, and his stories about the wildlife of those areas have been beloved by several generations of readers.

*The Worlds of Ernest Thompson Seton* consists of a series of brief excerpts from Seton's nature writings illustrated by fifty-seven of his paintings (thirty-six in color) and seventy-one drawings. A short concluding section reflects rather sketchily Seton's interest in the American Indian and the Boy Scout movement.

The nature excerpts are admirably chosen to afford an introduction to Seton's writings and to give insight into the truly encyclopedic range of his interest in and knowledge of animals and birds. The editor, John Samson, has very successfully integrated his own introductory remarks with Seton's text so as to provide the reader with a general biographical overview of Seton without interrupting the flow of the writing.

This volume is obviously not meant to be a definitive study of Seton; instead it is an introduction to this remarkable man's contributions to art and animal studies. It is meant to be a handsome book and a delight to the eye. It succeeds admirably on these counts. This is an ideal book for any nature enthusiast, one that can be read and appreciated by both adults and children.

Knopf is to be congratulated on this volume, and special recognition should go to the production staff of Ellen McNeilly, Louise Fili, and R. D. Scudellari. It is a rare pleasure these days for a book lover to have in his hands a handsomely designed and beautifully produced book.

It is encouraging to know that in a time of rapidly inflating book prices and mass-market considerations, it is still possible for the nation's publishing houses to turn out quality books like *The Worlds of Ernest Thompson Seton*. One can only wish this type of effort every success.

**Thomas Hunt** *is a professional artist and the author of* Ghost Trails to California.

**Geronimo: The Man, His Time, His Place** by Angie Debo *(University of Oklahoma, Norman, 1976; 500 pp., intro., illus., biblio., index, $14.95).*

REVIEWED BY ODIE B. FAULK

MILLIONS OF WORDS have been printed about the Chiricahua war chief Geronimo, but in almost none of the accounts to date does Geronimo emerge from dead prose as a human being. Angie Debo has corrected this oversight. Utilizing oral interviews as well as all available primary and secondary sources, she has drafted the definitive biography of this great warrior Apache.

Born about 1829, Geronimo as he grew to manhood was apparently indolent, for he was called Goyakla, "He Who Yawns." In 1858 his mother, wife, and three children were killed by Mexican scalp-bounty hunters. "I could not call back my loved ones, I could not bring back the dead Apaches, but I could rejoice in . . . revenge," he declared. During the next fifteen years he was known for his ferocity.

After his band was forced onto San Carlos Reservation, Geronimo rose to become a minor leader by 1881, when an outbreak occurred. However, pursued by General George Cook, the Apaches were forced to return.

In 1885 they fled again, angry at being cheated on their rations and unhappy with rules which forbade many of their tribal customs. Pursued by Mexican and American troops, the Apaches still managed to conduct numerous raids on both sides of the international boundary. In 1886 they met to discuss surrender terms with Crook, but some, including Geronimo, reneged and escaped.

For four months these thirty-nine renegades were pursued by five thousand American soldiers, an equal number of Mexican troops, plus many bounty hunters; but they never were forced into battle. In September, Geronimo agreed to surrender to Nelson A. Miles.

After two years in Florida the renegade Apaches were moved to Alabama and then in 1894 to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, where they would remain prisoners of war until 1913. Geronimo, after touring in several Wild West shows, died in 1909.

These events have been woven into a compassionate and understanding story by Angie Debo, a story worthy of close reading by all students of the American West.

**Odie B. Faulk** *is the author of* The Geronimo Campaign.

**The Pueblo Indians** by Joe S. Sando *(Indian Historian Press, San Francisco, 1976; 264 pp., intro., illus., maps, charts, biblio., appen., glossary, $6.00 paper).*

REVIEWED BY MARY GORMLY

FOR YEARS non-Indians, primarily historians and anthropologists, have "studied" the Native Americans and produced many volumes on their history and culture. But Native Americans have complained that whites are not able to interpret the thinking of Indians. Now they are writing their own histories, which are providing new interpretations of the Native American experience.

Joe S. Sando, a member of the Jemez Pueblo, has made a great addition to these studies through his book *The Pueblo Indians*. It is a history of the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico and includes such topics as traditional history; the Spanish conquest; the Pueblo Revolt; the role of the United States in Pueblo history; problems of land, water, and survival; elements of change and their effects; and persons who have shaped Pueblo history.

Much of the book is based on oral history as well as on Indian documents that have not been used previously. The result is a new and, I am sure, more accurate interpretation of Pueblo history and culture.

Appendices in the book include a historical outline of important events in Pueblo history, the Constitution of the All Pueblo Council, and data on patron saints, feast days, native speakers, population, and land holdings. There is also a glossary of terms and an excellent bibliography.

This thoughtful, well-researched, and well-written book is an important addition to the literature on the Pueblo Indians and should rank with the anthropological works of the late Dr. Edward P. Dozier, a native of Santa Clara Pueblo (his biography is included in Sando's book), and Dr. Alfonso Ortiz, a native of San Juan Pueblo. It is hoped that in the future more studies such as this one will be written by Native Americans.

Although the book is a paperback, it maintains the high standards of the Indian Historical Press. Needless to say, *The Pueblo Indians* is highly recommended, and the comparatively low price should encourage most libraries and many interested individuals to buy it.

**Mary Gormly** *is a reference librarian at California State University, Los Angeles, with specialization in anthropology, Native Americans, and Latin America.*

**Vigilante!** by William E. Burrows *(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York, 1976; 311 pp., intro., illus., biblio., notes, index, $12.95).*

REVIEWED BY BRIAN MCGINTY

VIGILANTISM is far from an exclusively American phenomenon. It existed in Europe in the Middle Ages and, in modern times, has occurred with frequency in Germany, the Soviet Union, Ireland, Algeria, Argentina, and Chile. But the phenomenon has found particularly fertile soil in the United States. Between 1767 and 1902, at least 326 distinct vigilante groups were organized—in the twentieth century even more. William E. Burrows has described and analyzed the interaction of traditional American values and the vigilante experience—an experience that began at Plymouth Plantation, flourished on the Western frontier, and survives today in such disparate places as Montana, Boston, and California's San Joaquin Valley.

Burrows believes that the vigilante movement has been nourished by three characteristically American concepts: popular sovereignty (democracy), the right of revolution (exemplified in the ideals and experience of 1776), and the "law" of self-preservation (the belief that in the defense of life and property the end justifies the means).

Before publication of Walter Van Tilburg Clark's *The Ox-Bow Incident* (1940), vigilantes were favorably portrayed in American literature, popular and scholarly. Hubert Howe Bancroft painted a sympathetic picture of the San Francisco Committee in his *Popular Tribunals* (1887), and in *The Virginian* (1902) Owen Wister defended the right of the people "to take back what they once gave" (i.e., the law). *The Ox-Bow Incident* may have tipped the scales of popular opinion against vigilantes, but it did not change fundamental values or attitudes. Burrows's own view of vigilantism is balanced: He finds some historical episodes senseless, others unnecessary, still others justified. *Vigilante!* is a lucid, readable, and informative history. More, it is a revealing psychological and sociological insight into a recurring American phenomenon, one that, in an age of rapidly increasing crime and growing dissatisfaction with law enforcement, cannot safely be dismissed as either dead or dying.

**Brian McGinty,** *an attorney and writer, has written on western history for this and other magazines.*


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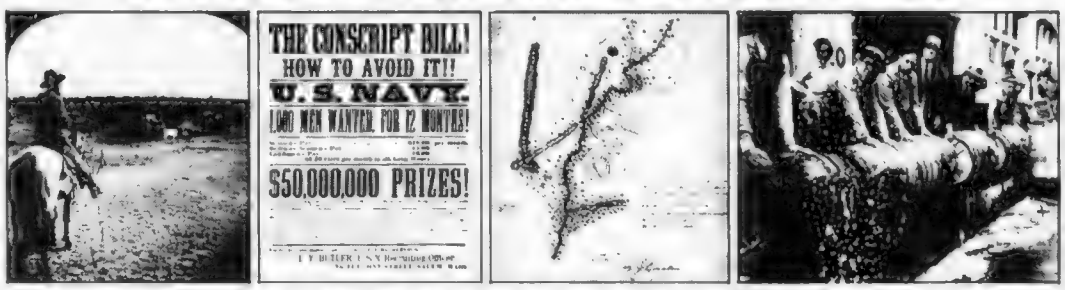


AMERICA'S PAST

America has stored up lots of memories over the past 200 years. The story of her land and her people stretches from 13 struggling colonies and leaders like George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson, to the 50 proud states she now calls her own. She's kept these memories—the documents, photographs, maps, films, and sound recordings that are our nation's history—preserved for all and forever, in the National Archives.

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Rounding-up cattle in Kansas, ca. 1902. The Union Navy recruits sailors, 1862. Battle of the Little Big Horn, 1876. America enforces prohibition, 1931.

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# WESTERN HISTORY ASSOCIATION

*(Continued from page 31)*

They were held each October from that day on as a succession of presidents came and went, aided during the early years by the perennial secretary-treasurer John Porter Bloom, who was now in the National Park Service. Attendance varied with the attractions and accessibility of the host city—Salt Lake City, Oklahoma City, Helena, El Paso, San Francisco, Tucson, Omaha, Reno—but mounted steadily as word spread of the fun and learning enjoyed by all. By 1971 when the association returned to Santa Fe to celebrate its first decade, some 1,200 crowded the La Fonda Inn and nearby motels. Membership had reached 2,750 by that time.

This spectacular growth made some form of publication necessary. All agreed that no "scholarly" journal would do; the articles must be authentic enough to satisfy the most rigid academician yet readable enough to delight the least informed buff. The result was *The American West*, appearing first in the winter of 1964 under the sponsorship of the University of Utah and the editorship of Dr. A. Russell Mortensen. Its success spelled difficulties, for the readable articles, spectacular displays of western art, and handsome format all suggested that it deserved a wider audience. This was made possible in 1965 when publication was transferred to the American West Publishing Company founded by George Pfeiffer III, with, in 1966, Wallace Stegner as editor-in-chief and Roger Olmsted as editor. "I have a hope," wrote Stegner, "that *The American West* can help a great many westerners, native and immigrant alike, locate themselves in place and time, and take their places as members of a society with a known tradition and a legitimate traditional pride." Since that time the magazine has admirably lived up to this goal, familiarizing westerners—and easterners and Europeans as well—with the rich traditions of Western America.

For a time this excellent magazine satisfied the association's needs, but inevitably a demand mounted for a journal that could offer members—professional and amateur alike—an outlet for articles that would advance knowledge of the West without the necessity of appealing to a wide audience. Recognizing this demand, and inspired by an offer of sponsorship from Utah State University, the Western History Association in January 1970 launched the *Western Historical Quarterly*, a solid historical journal complete with scholarly articles, reviews, lists of articles, and enough footnotes to satisfy the most exacting academician. Today *The American West* and the *Western Historical Quarterly* come to all members who pay the modest dues of the association—an unparalleled bargain made possible by the generous support of more than fifty "sponsoring institutions"—universities, museums, historical societies, libraries, and business concerns—that take pride in promoting an understanding of the West.

Now, fifteen years after that memorable gathering at Santa Fe, the Western History Association is a thriving organization, happy in its two bargain-rate journals, staging a lively meeting each October, sponsoring prizes and awards to stimulate the study of the frontier past, and luring an ever growing number of "amateur" and "professional" western enthusiasts into its ranks. Its 1976 convention, held again in Denver but this time without a Second Coming, attracted well over a thousand members who listened to speakers at twenty-five sessions discuss aspects of the western past and present, heard three major addresses, toured the city's museums and historic sites, and visited such glamorous nearby attractions as the Bent's Fort restoration and colorful Georgetown. Similar delights, and more, await those who descend on Portland, Oregon, between October 12 and 15, 1977, to renew old friendships, argue interminably over Custer's guilt or Frémont's ambitions, sample the hundreds of books on the West displayed by publishers, and enjoy the companionship of men and women whose excitement over the frontier past rivals their own.

When, back in 1964, I was asked to prepare a "Greeting and Challenge" for the first issue of *The American West*, I concluded my brief remarks with these words: "Those who read this magazine, whatever their occupation or interest, are cordially invited to join the Western History Association, and to share in the exciting experience of exploring America's pioneer past, actually and vicariously." That invitation is as cordial today as it was then.

**Ray A. Billington,** *senior research associate at the Huntington Library, San Marino, California, is a former president of the Western History Association.*

# FIRST CROSSING

*(Continued from page 11)*

twenty-five miles long and that in that distance the water dropped 270 feet, a monstrous torrent when spring melt filled the chasm from bank to bank.

For two days the voyageurs fought the flood, mostly by towing. Occasionally they had to unload and portage across protruding ledges. When the bank they were following grew too sheer for footholds, they found quiet pools and paddled to the opposite shore.

Rolling rocks endangered both the workers and the canoe. Stops for repairs were dismayingly frequent. As resentment increased and the rapids showed no sign of diminishing, Mackenzie sent scouts ahead. Their reports led him to decide on a backbreaking expedient: they would climb out of the precipitous canyon and portage to the far tip of the V, a prospect made gloomier still by persistent rain.

They had to chop out a trail to the top of the hillside, cautiously lift the canoe stage by stage with ropes snubbed around tree trunks, and then, slipping and stumbling, hoist up the ninety-pound bales. The land on top was cluttered with down timber and roughened by gullies and rocky ridges. Gaining the canyon's upper end consumed three days.

After that ordeal the cold that flowed down from the towering peaks on either side, the slashing rain, and the constant labor with setting poles seemed almost ordinary. Regularly Mackenzie rewarded hard work with praise and lifted spirits with extra rations of rum. His own zest was fired by signs of an almost infinite treasure in beaver.

On the last day of May they reached the point where the river split. The Indians, the voyageurs, and Alexander McKay wanted to turn north. The river looked easier, and the distance to the Pacific, to judge from Mackenzie's observations and his memory of Cook's surveys, was shorter. But the old Indian at the post had been insistent: don't go north. Against the stunned protests of his men, Mackenzie ordered the canoe south up what became known as the Parsnip. (The northern branch was later named the Finlay, after the first man to explore it. It proved as hopeless for transportation as the old Indian had reported.)

The Parsnip had overflowed its banks. Mosquitoes were a torment, camping places hard to find. At times the explorers could move forward only by seizing overhead branches and pulling. They had to patch and repatch the canoe. Finally, as the stream grew shallow and hope sank, they found Indians, and after interminable talk prevailed on one to lead them to a portage 817 steps long that took them to Pacific drainage.

The way stayed hard. They had to clear away fallen trees, and once, when the current sent the canoe caroming from bank to boulder and back, they were able to save it only by leaping overboard and hanging onto the gunwales until their feet found purchase enough so that they could drag the craft ashore. By the time they had put it together again, mostly with oilcloth and hope, it weighed almost twice as much as when they had started.

In time they reached a swift brown flood whose Indian name was Tacoutche-Tesse. (Today it is the Fraser.) It swept them past wooden houses, temporarily abandoned, that were larger than anything Mackenzie had seen since leaving the forested East. The first Indians they met proved hostile, but Mackenzie coolly faced them down and began groping for information. Meanwhile he had to fight the growing panic of his men with exhortations and judicious applications of rum.

In the end the Indians convinced him that the Tacoutche-Tesse would not serve. It ran far, far south through frantic canyons and past warlike tribes before reaching the sea. He should turn back to today's Blackwater, ascend it as far as possible, and then strike west along foot trails used by Indian traders moving back and forth between the coast and the mountains.

All that wasted effort! Dispiritedly the wayfarers turned back against the thundering rapids. Their canoe collapsed, and they had to build a new one of laboriously gathered bark, watape, and cedar slats. On leaving the water they hid the new craft, of which they were very proud, under a pile of boughs and buried whatever pemmican and ammunition they could not carry for use on their return journey.

Their loads were heavy—ninety pounds each for the voyageurs, seventy pounds plus scientific instruments for both Mackenzie and McKay, and forty-five pounds each for the two Indians. The guides they had hired struck off at a faster pace than the burdened men could match, yet the procedure turned out to be proper, for it forewarned the villagers ahead that the approaching strangers were harmless.

They crossed the stony uplands of the Coast Range and started down the plunging Bella Coola River. The people of the numerous villages were friendly. They fed the whites salmon and occasionally gave them exhilarating rides in big canoes made of cedar wood. But as the party neared the fiords that thrust far inland from the Pacific, their reception grew chillier. Finally only a single Indian could be persuaded to continue with them in the leaky vessel they were able to borrow for threading a way through the mountain-girt channels.

The glimpse of the open ocean they gained near the mouth of Dean Channel was satisfaction enough for the voyageurs, but Mackenzie made them wait in chill fog for the skies to clear so that he could bring his telescope to bear on Jupiter's moons and determine, as he had been unable to do at the mouth of the Mackenzie River, exactly where they were. During this period, while they subsisted on scanty rations and rainwater caught in rock pools, they were harassed by local Indians, one of whom claimed to have been shot at by white men on a sailing vessel. The ship, Mackenzie eventually learned, belonged to George Vancouver's exploring expedition and had visited this very spot only weeks before—a favorable omen, perhaps, for the land-ocean linkage he was seeking.

His observations completed, he mixed vermilion in melted grease and printed in large letters on the face of the seashore rock beside which they had camped one of the famous declarations of North American exploration: "Alexander Mackenzie, from Canada, by land, the twenty-second of July, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-three." Of the weary men watching the performance there was not one word.

THE RETURN TRIP was less arduous, in part because the way was known, fear was allayed, and, mostly, because the rivers had shrunk back within their banks. On August 24, they passed the fort from which they had departed in May, and by early September they were back at Fort Chipewyan.

For Mackenzie the letdown was terrible. Rory had been transferred to another post, and, once the winterers had been dispatched, little work remained to distract him. Glumly he wrote his cousin, "What a pretty situation I am in this winter—starving and alone—without the power of doing myself or anyone else any service." Overwhelmed by lethargy, he could not even bring himself to work up his field notes into a coherent journal. Night after night he was plagued by nightmares: dead faces staring and staring at him.

By day doubts came. He had reached his goal, he had seen the limitless water. But the route he had followed would not justify building a supply depot on the coast so that Athabasca and the upper Churchill could be served from the west. The backbreaking old route from Montreal, vulnerable to attack from Hudson Bay, would still have to serve, unless . . . and his imagination roamed like a hunting dog across the full sweep of the continent, searching for a solution.

By spring he thought he had found it. Let rivalries be forgotten and the Hudson's Bay and North West companies be merged on terms worked out by negotiators from each firm. Coalition achieved, the interior could be supplied with heavy goods brought through Hudson Bay. Furs, by contrast, were light. Those from the North Saskatchewan, Athabasca, and the Peace River could be carried across the Continental Divide to the great "River of the West." After portages had been prepared—he could not feature a truly impassable river—the treasure could be floated and packed during times of low water downstream to the sea. At a harbor there ships could pick it up, along with otter pelts gathered from the entire coast, for sale in China.

It was a grand, global scheme. After the discovery of the Columbia River, a much more amenable stream than the Fraser, many men, including John Jacob Astor of the United States, tried to develop variants of the plan. But Mackenzie, though he was knighted for his exploits and became world famous for the accounts he wrote of them, proved temperamentally unable to bring about or even practice the peace he advocated. Utterly frustrated, he finally split with the leading Nor'Westers and formed a competitive company of his own. Not until much blood had been spilled and the stormy petrels of the trade had died (Mackenzie himself in March 1820) did the continent-wide union he had envisioned come to pass. But he had pointed the way, and although his disappointments were bitter and his outbursts of arrogance unfortunate, his demerits have long since been forgotten in the brightness of his accomplishments.

**David Lavender** *is the author of many books on the West, including* David Lavender's Colorado; California: A Bicentennial History; *and* Nothing Seemed Impossible: William C. Ralston and Early San Francisco.

# FORT VANCOUVER

*(Continued from page 19)*

backed aristocracy" a degree of control over the general population. One pioneer claimed, with some exaggeration, that the company's retired employees living in the Willamette Valley would not give an American even a potato without the approval of the chief factor at Fort Vancouver. Clearly, historian Frederick Merk had reason to describe the Columbia depot as the "de facto capital of all the Oregon Country."

Not until the beginning of large-scale immigration from the United States and the arrival of American merchants during the early 1840s did the balance of economic and political power begin to shift toward the Willamette Valley. Then events moved with such a rush that by 1845 McLoughlin found it necessary to join the settlers' provisional government in order to preserve the company's lands and improvements.

WHAT HAD BEEN CONSIDERED a satisfactory site for a secondary establishment would no longer do when it was realized in about 1828–29 that Fort Vancouver might for several decades to come be the supply point for the entire department. The chief factor and his assistants selected a more convenient location on the river plain about a mile west of the old fort and some four hundred yards from the Columbia, and construction of a new depot began during the spring of 1829. The first palisade, 318 feet square, proved too small, and the fort was enlarged at intervals until the enclosed area eventually measured 732 by 325 feet, about the same size as five football fields placed side by side.

The new post had no bastions, galleries, or loopholes. The neighboring Indians had proved so friendly that the palisade alone was considered sufficient protection, but by the early 1840s tension between Great Britain and the United States had reached such a pitch that the company's officers feared attack by American settlers. No action was taken to strengthen defenses, however, until after June 15, 1844, when a salute from H.M.S. *Modeste* could not be

returned because no guns were mounted. The embarrassed fur traders quickly erected a three-story bastion at the northwest corner of the stockade, and soon eight small guns in its octagonal cap were available to honor arriving vessels and departing brigades. Thereafter a great annual event was the firing of a twenty-one-gun salute on the queen's birthday.

By the mid 1840s the interior of the fort was dominated by four massive, two-story, hipped-roof warehouses ranged along the west and south walls. Like most of the twenty-three major buildings they were unpainted and constructed in the "Canadian" style of heavy, hand-hewn timbers set horizontally into upright grooved posts placed about ten feet apart on thick sills. These "stores" were the very heart of the western fur trade.

The best-finished of these warehouses contained the trade shop, where a bewildering array of articles, ranging from thimbles to castor oil, was kept on hand for sale to employees, travelers, and settlers. Here also were stored part of the goods opened for the current season's Indian trade. Clerks were kept busy much of the year disassembling the bales and boxes from London and repacking the articles in bundles or "pieces" according to orders received from the many scattered posts. Finally, the "outfits" were sent off by the sturdy little Columbia boats, by ship, or by pack-train to their destinations. A second store contained a year's emergency supply of goods, and the third was for provisions. The fourth warehouse was the fur store, where the harvest of pelts from all the western posts was accumulated and carefully tended until it was time to ship the returns to London by the annual supply vessels.

Also conspicuous was the Indian trade shop. Contrary to the practice at most company posts, the natives were permitted free access to the courtyard during business hours. In the Indian shop they exchanged furs and such items as salmon, venison, baskets, and canoes for necessities and frivolities like blankets, guns, ammunition, tobacco, beads, and rings. Not far from this bustling mart was the blacksmith shop, where a squad of smiths turned out axes, beaver traps, nails, hinges, and even massive hardware for ships. A bakery produced bread for the post and biscuit for the company's vessels and establishments on the Northwest Coast. Even more important for the prosperity of the trade and, in fact, for the economy of the entire Pacific Northwest was the large granary, capable of storing up to eighteen thousand bushels. Surplus wheat from the firm's own fields and that purchased from the Willamette settlers was exported from here to Hawaii and Alaska. The receipts the company gave for the grain long served as one of Oregon's principal forms of currency.

The hub of life at Fort Vancouver and the administrative seat of the Columbia Department was the "Big House." This large dwelling with its white exterior, green shutters, vine-shaded veranda, and "half semicircle double stairway" leading to the first floor, was the residence of Dr. McLoughlin and his principal assistant, Chief Factor James Douglas, who later became Sir James Douglas, governor of British Columbia.

McLoughlin's office was in his quarters, and from it a stream of correspondence and orders went out to his subordinates concerning every phase of departmental operations. Through his windows the "White-Headed Eagle" kept a keen eye on activities within the stockade; sometimes he intervened in very minor matters. George W. Ebbert, a Willamette settler generally known as "Squire," described his experience when he visited the sale shop to buy an expensive coat, a fine shirt, and some chinaware cups and saucers. The "Big Doctor," who firmly believed that the poor should live humbly, noted these purchases. "O Squire, Squire," he admonished, "crawl, crawl. By and by you will begin to run. Take common things. Take a tin pan. Take a tin plate."

The manager's residence also contained the mess hall. There Dr. McLoughlin demonstrated that he did not consider himself one of those who should live humbly. Only "gentlemen"—the company's commissioned officers and clerks—and their male guests were permitted to dine at the mess table, and they fared well indeed. Visitors marveled at the variety of foods and the elegant table service encountered at this oasis of gentility in the wilderness. A wide range of fresh fruits and vegetables from the fort garden and an abundance of fish, venison, duck, geese, pork, puddings, and breads were served on a table set with gleaming white cloth, English earthenware, and glittering goblets and wine decanters. Peter Skene Ogden, John Work, Sir George Simpson, and James Allan Grahame were only a few of the renowned British traders who enjoyed McLoughlin's groaning board. The good doctor coldly rebuffed persons he considered riffraff, but those of obvious good breeding or rank were made welcome. A long succession of scientists, explorers, army and navy officers, sightseers, and even rival traders savored the delights of the mess table. Among them were sportsman-adventurer Sir William Drummond Stewart, naturalists David Douglas and Thomas Nuttall, John C. Frémont, and Lt. William Peel, son of the British prime minister.

The lower grades of company employees did not share this luxury. Every Saturday evening the laborers, artisans, and other "servants" received a ration of peas, salmon, bread or biscuit, and tallow, with occasionally a bit of game. The men carried these provisions to their homes which were not, as at most posts, within the stockade but scattered like so many cows in a pasture over the plain southwest of the fort. There the meals were prepared by the men themselves or by their Indian or mixed-blood wives.

Counting women and children there were perhaps five hundred people living in this "village" and at nearby farms and mills, for Fort Vancouver was far more than the stockade and its immediate surroundings. Cultivated fields, dairies, and pastures extended for miles above and below the main establishment, and even onto islands in the Columbia. Six miles east of the fort the "deep music" of a three-and-a-half story gristmill was heard night and day for half the year. A mile beyond was a large sawmill. About thirty men, chiefly Hawaiians, turned out timbers and lumber there for shipment to Pacific ports.

These mills, together with shops for coopers, tinsmiths, harness makers, chandlers, tanners, and shipwrights, among others, formed a busy manufacturing center. In

PHOTOGRAPH FROM THE BRITISH BOUNDARY COMMISSION, 18[illegible]

U.S. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, FORT VANCOUVER NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

*Fort Vancouver's original "Big House," here pictured during the last years of its existence, contained the residence and office of the chief factor as well as a mess hall for company clerks and officers.*

1836, Narcissa Whitman was so impressed by all the activity that she called Fort Vancouver the "New York of the Pacific Ocean." Certainly it was for many years the largest settlement between San Francisco Bay and Sitka, Alaska.

Fort Vancouver was the natural first objective of the American missionaries and settlers who entered Oregon initially in a trickle and then in a flood. McLoughlin knew that farming and the fur trade could not mix, but he did not have the heart to refuse credit, temporary shelter, and other assistance to these often-destitute newcomers even though to grant such extensive aid was contrary to company policy. He foresaw that the Willamette Valley must eventually be thickly populated, and he believed it would be better to have friends than enemies as neighbors.

NOT ALL OF THE AMERICANS were grateful for the kindnesses shown them, and by 1844 the London directors feared that tension over the Oregon question would lead to "lawless aggression" by the settlers against Fort Vancouver. To provide greater safety for the supplies and returns, the main depot of the Columbia Department was moved north to Fort Victoria on Vancouver Island during the next year. This shift had an unexpected result. It helped to bring about a peaceful settlement of the boundary dispute since Great Britain, not eager for war, was able to back down from its earlier position by announcing that possession of the lower Columbia was no longer essential for the British fur trade.

After the Oregon Treaty was signed in 1846, seventeen Hudson's Bay posts south of the forty-ninth parallel found themselves within the United States. By that time John McLoughlin's increasingly independent ways had brought him into open conflict with Governor Simpson, and he was virtually forced into retirement. His successors tried valiantly to cope with hostile customs collectors, squatters, law suits, increasing competition, and a host of other troubles that resulted from being an alien corporation in an unfriendly land. Discouraged, James Douglas shifted the Columbia Department headquarters to Fort Victoria when he was transferred there in 1849. Fort Vancouver remained only a subsidiary depot and administrative center for the posts south of the forty-ninth parallel.

Even before 1846 the fur trade of the lower Columbia region had declined, and the business conducted at Fort Vancouver increasingly centered about the trade shop. Affairs prospered through the California gold rush, but then American merchants in Portland and other new cities captured most of the merchandising trade. By 1860 squatters had appropriated nearly all the company's livestock and improvements. Only fourteen employees remained at Fort Vancouver to oversee a four-acre garden and four small fields.

The final blow came from the United States Army, which had established a military post behind the fort in 1849. At first relations between the company and the military were harmonious, but as the years passed the army officers tended to forget they had occupied the ground with the permission of the traders, and they came to regard the presence of the fort as a nuisance. Early in 1860 fiery Brigadier General W. S. Harney ordered the company's officers to leave the reservation. All valuable property was shipped to Victoria, and on June 14, 1860, the keys were

U.S. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, FORT VANCOUVER NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

*Today the "Big House," reconstructed by the National Park Service, is furnished much as it was in the 1840s when the white-maned doctor and his assistants dined together in its mess hall.*

turned over to the army quartermaster. Due to British diplomatic pressure, Harney's actions were later disavowed, but the company never returned. Fire and vandalism ate away at the deserted buildings, and in 1866 only a rick of rotten hay was visible.

As decades passed the exact site of the old post was forgotten, but a conviction developed in the Pacific Northwest that a place of such importance in the region's history should be identified and suitably marked. A gala celebration of the fort's centennial in 1925 gave impetus to a movement for reconstruction which eventually made itself felt in the halls of Congress. National Park Service archaeologist Louis R. Caywood discovered the rotted stumps of the stockade in 1947, and the next year Fort Vancouver National Historic Site was authorized.

From that time until today rebuilding has proceeded slowly but with exciting results. The only remaining original structure, a stone-lined well, has been cleared. The stockade once again surrounds the old courtyard, while at its northwest corner the bastion stands ready to salute the queen's birthday. Inside the palisade the "Big House," furnished as it was in 1845, seems waiting for the good doctor and his "gentlemen" to take their places in the mess hall. The kitchen, bakery, and wash house give a hint of the domestic and industrial activity that so impressed Narcissa Whitman. If plans for future construction materialize, the sheer massiveness of Fort Vancouver will become yet more apparent. It will then be still easier to visualize the men who lived and worked there, men whose accomplishments caused even a hostile observer to admit that the foundation of the Oregon Country was "laid by the Honourable Company."

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE

All of the numerous histories of the Pacific Northwest contain accounts, long or short, of Hudson's Bay Company operations in the Far West. An excellent popular summary is found in the first edition of Dorothy O. Johansen and Charles M. Gates, *Empire of the Columbia* (New York: Harper & Row, 1957); a more detailed study, containing much valuable source material, is in Robert Carlton Clark, *History of the Willamette Valley, Oregon* (3 vols., Chicago, 1927). But the best presentation to date is in scattered portions of the second volume of E. E. Rich, *The History of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1670–1870* (2 vols., London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1958–59). No really satisfactory, book-length history of Fort Vancouver yet exists. The present writer's *The History of Fort Vancouver and its Physical Structure* ([Olympia]: Washingington State Historical Society, [1957]) emphasizes the evolution of the fort buildings and only summarizes the events that occurred there. Unfortunately the extensive archaeological and historical reports prepared by several scholars for the National Park Service are available, when at all, only in processed form.

There are several biographies of John McLoughlin, all of which necessarily contain much on Fort Vancouver. One of the best-written is Richard G. Montgomery, *The White-Headed Eagle: John McLoughlin, Builder of an Empire* (New York: Macmillan, 1934). All accounts of McLoughlin's career prior to 1846, however, have largely been superseded by W. Kaye Lamb's superb introductions to *The Letters of John McLoughlin to the Governor and Committee*, ed. E. E. Rich (3 vols., Toronto: The Champlain Society; London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1941, 1943, 1944). These volumes, it should be remarked, are an indispensable source for the study of all aspects of life at the Columbia depot. For an understanding of the founding and early years of the post there is no substitute for Governor Simpson's own frank words as recorded in Frederick Merk, ed., *Fur Trade and Empire: George Simpson's Journal . . . 1824–25* (rev. ed., Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968).

**John A. Hussey** *is a historian who was for many years with the National Park Service. He is the author of a number of books on Northwest and California history.*

Membership in the Western History Association is open to anyone interested in the history and culture of the American West. Inquiries should be addressed to the Secretary, William D. Rowley, Department of History, University of Nevada, Reno, Nevada 89507. Membership is on a calendar-year basis and includes THE AMERICAN WEST and WESTERN HISTORICAL QUARTERLY. Annual dues are: Regular Member $16.00; Sustaining Member $30.00; Student Member & Emeritus Member $10.00 (includes only the WESTERN HISTORICAL QUARTERLY and Annual Conference material); Sponsoring Member $100.00 (Institution); Life Member $200.00, paid in a twelve-month period. Individuals or institutions not wishing to become members may subscribe directly to either THE AMERICAN WEST or the WESTERN HISTORICAL QUARTERLY at regular subscription rates.


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# Oregon Beckons!

THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE

PORTLAND, Oregon will be the site of the Seventeenth Annual Conference of the Western History Association, October 12–15 at the Portland Hilton Hotel. A wide-ranging group of session topics has been scheduled, including such diverse subjects as ethnic groups, federal agencies and natural resources, power structure and society in the West, gambling in Nevada, patriotism in twentieth-century California, exploration in the Pacific Northwest, frontier law and justice, agriculture, Indian education, the urban West, and original local history research.

Among the special activities planned for the conference are an afternoon tour of Fort Vancouver on October 13 and a day-long excursion to the mouth of the Columbia and to Forts Columbia and Canby on October 15. For complete information and registration forms, write William D. Rowley, Department of History, University of Nevada, Reno, Nevada 89507.

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